

Urgent Times, URGENT ACTION

APPENDIX A

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Appendix A: Progress on Commitments under the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act and Our Climate, Our Future: Nova Scotia's Climate Change Action Plan for Clean Growth

The Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act legislates 28 goals that aim to drive sustainable prosperity in Nova Scotia. These actions aim to grow the clean economy, protect nature (including the air and water needed to live healthy lives), and address the climate change emergency. The 68 actions under Our Climate, Our Future: Nova Scotia's Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth contribute to advancing many of the goals in the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act. This work involves efforts across many departments and in collaboration with many sectors.

The appendix below outlines progress since the 2023 progress report on both the goals of the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act and the actions under Our Climate, Our Future: Nova Scotia's Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth.

While this document showcases significant efforts, it represents a snapshot of the extensive work being done across the province. **These actions work together to support the sustainability and resiliency of our province.**

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The science is clear – we must reduce global greenhouse gas emissions if we want to avoid the most severe impacts of climate change. Below are updates on our current emissions and the actions Government is taking to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal One:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 53 per cent below 2005 levels, by the year 2030, and be net-zero by 2050.

In 2022, Nova Scotia emitted 14.77 megatonnes of greenhouse gases. This marks a 35.2 per cent reduction in emissions since 2005. These emissions come from various sources across the province, such as electricity, transportation, and buildings. The data on greenhouse gas emissions is sourced from Canada's [National Inventory Report](#), which reports with a two-year delay.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that are Helping to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
21	Work with our neighbouring provinces to transfer more electricity across Atlantic Canada and Québec through projects like the Atlantic Loop, Muskrat Falls, and stronger connections with New Brunswick.	<p>Nova Scotia is making significant progress in advancing its regional energy initiatives and strengthening connections with neighboring provinces. The Clean Power Plan acts as the roadmap for transitioning the province’s electricity sector towards cleaner, more sustainable power sources.</p> <p>Last year, we imported 1,820 gigawatt hours of electricity from other provinces or approximately 16.6 per cent of total electricity sales in Nova Scotia in 2023.</p> <p>The Province will continue to expand electricity imports with our neighbours to meet our targets. Maritime Link, Labrador Island Link, and Muskrat Falls facilities are already providing us clean electricity. Government is also committed to expanding our connection to New Brunswick by investing in a new 345 kilovolts line known as the ‘Reliability Tie’. This will increase our grid’s ability to handle more renewable energy resources like wind.</p>
29	Ban installations of oil-fired heating equipment in new buildings by 2025.	Government is working to cut emissions created by the building sector, which, in 2021, was the third-largest source of emissions in Nova Scotia. This includes looking at how other places, such as Quebec and Vancouver, have banned oil-fired heating equipment in new buildings.

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
63	Invest in research needed for new clean technologies and practices to help us meet our net-zero by 2050 target.	<p>In 2022, the Province invested in Nova Scotia’s clean technology sector. This support enabled the Verschuren Centre for Sustainability in Energy and the Environment, located in Sydney, to expand into a national biomanufacturing centre – the first of its kind in Canada. This expansion initially created 40 jobs and aims to attract 10 new companies per year.</p> <p>Since then, this investment helped grow Nova Scotia’s bioeconomy sector by increasing Small and Medium Enterprise attraction and scale up through the Verschuren Center pilot biomanufacturing center. Over the last year, the number of companies, new hires, and company investment has grown in Nova Scotia along national and international trajectories. The Verschuren Centre has attracted companies from across Canada, the United States of America, and the European Union.</p>

Taking Action and Accountability

The Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act mandates the development of a climate change action plan. Additionally, the Act requires public progress reporting on the actions and goals outlined in the plan.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Two:

Creation of a ‘Our Climate, Our Future: Nova Scotia’s Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth’ which addresses:

- (a) achieving the greenhouse gas emission targets set out in the Act;
- (b) adapting to the impacts of climate change and building a climate resilient province
- (c) accelerating the integration of sustainable and innovative technologies and approaches; and
- (d) clean inclusive growth

This goal was achieved In December 2022 when Government released [Our Climate, Our Future: Nova Scotia’s Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth](#). The plan has 68 actions, informed by the new provincial climate change risk assessment, discussions with Nova Scotians, and emerging opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These actions support and expand upon many goals in the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Support Accountability:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
67	Report annually on progress and impacts of the actions in the climate change plan.	This is the second annual report on progress and impacts of the actions and commitments outlined in the climate change action plan under the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act. Previous reports can be found here .
68	Review and renew the climate change plan within five years of its release.	The Province continues to enhance its understanding and apply learnings as it implements actions within the climate change action plan. This ongoing effort ensures that our response to climate change remains relevant and responsive to the needs of Nova Scotians.

Increasing the Use of Zero-emission Vehicles

Zero-emissions vehicles benefit both the environment and public health by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation and supporting cleaner air and quieter neighbourhoods.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Three:

Develop and implement a zero-emission vehicle mandate that ensures, at a minimum, that 30 per cent of new vehicle sales for all light-duty and personal vehicles in the province will be zero-emission vehicles by 2030. Develop and implement supporting initiatives for this goal.

- This goal is reinforced in **action #36** in the climate change action plan.

Nova Scotians are charging up for a cleaner future! In 2023, 4.4 per cent of all new vehicles purchased in Nova Scotia were zero-emission, showing a steady increase from 3 per cent in 2022 and 1.6 per cent in 2021. Now there are over 4500 electric vehicles on our roads – up from 3200 last year.

The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables is exploring the benefits and challenges of implementing a provincial zero-emission vehicle mandate. This year, the Department worked with a consultant to review the results of a study to assess the impact of a zero-emission vehicle mandate. At the same time, the Department is investing in programs that enable Nova Scotians to transition to zero-emission vehicles and leverage federal incentives. For more information on available programs and incentives, please visit [EV Assist](#).

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Help to Increase the Use of Zero-emission Vehicles:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
35	Build more electric vehicle charging stations across the province so Nova Scotians can access them when and where they need to.	<p>Last year, Government launched electric vehicle (EV) rebates for installing charging stations in apartment and condominium buildings. To date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight EV Charger/EV Ready rebates have been issued. For more details about the program, visit EfficiencyOne • The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables has started working with community partners to deploy new level 3 fast chargers. For more information on publicly accessible charging stations, visit EV Assist <p>Additionally, the Department is working with partners to enhance the skills of tradespeople to work with electric vehicles. This past year, 18 Red Seal electricians participated in the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training program.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
36	Increase the number of zero-emissions vehicles and e-bikes to meet the 2030 30 per cent zero-emissions vehicle sales target by continuing to offer rebates and continuing to provide education and outreach programs.	<p>The Electrify program continues to offer rebates on the purchase of zero-emission vehicles and e-bikes, significantly contributing to their increasing numbers in Nova Scotia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives supported the purchase of 1,813 electric vehicles in Nova Scotia this year • Additionally, 2,089 e-bike owners received rebates to facilitate their transition to electric • Combined with last year’s incentives, over 3,000 Nova Scotians have been supported in their purchase of an electric vehicle along with over 6,000 e-bike owners <p>To further promote adoption, this year NextRide has expanded its outreach and educational efforts across the province. The team attended 130 events, helping 2,089 Nova Scotians test drive electric vehicles and 270 test ride electric bicycles.</p>
37	Increase the number of zero-emissions medium- and heavy-duty, freight, and marine vehicles through new incentives.	<p>In April 2024, a rebate program for medium- and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles was launched to support the transition of commercial and industrial vehicles like vans, trucks, and ice resurfacers. Detailed program information is available at Clean Foundation. Some vehicles may qualify for federal incentives as well through Transport Canada.</p> <p>The Fisheries and Aquaculture Energy Efficiency Innovation Fund was launched in June 2024 by the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture. This program aims to reduce emissions in the maritime sector, aligning with broader environmental goals. More information about the program is available here.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
40	Electrify public transit across the province by partnering with municipalities and the federal government.	<p>Government has made significant progress in electrifying public transit over the past year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In November 2023, the Province invested \$17.9 million in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality for the purchase of six new electric buses and the construction of a new maintenance facility. This facility will not only serve the current diesel bus fleet but also provide charging and maintenance infrastructure to eventually support 44 electric buses, aiming for net-zero emissions by 2030 In March 2024, the Province, in partnership with the Federal Government and the Halifax Regional Municipality, announced an investment of \$65 million to support the purchase of five electric ferries and the construction of two terminals and a maintenance facility to serve the municipality
20	Research how we can use battery technologies or electric vehicles for electricity storage and back-up power supplies to make our electricity system more reliable.	<p>In December, Government approved a 150 megawatts, three-site battery energy storage project with Nova Scotia Power, enhancing the province’s energy storage capacity. This project was approved under Section 4D of the Electricity Act, which was amended last year to allow for unsolicited battery storage projects if they provide system benefits and reduce costs to ratepayers.</p> <p>Additionally, the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables funded two projects to explore vehicle to grid technologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A project with Université Sainte-Anne to test the integration of an electric school bus with on-site renewable energy sources A project with Volta Research to develop a comprehensive vehicle-to-grid roadmap

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
41	Explore opportunities for electric school buses through a strategic pilot project.	<p>In the fall of 2023, the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training engaged WSP Canada to complete an electric school bus feasibility study for the participating Atlantic provinces (Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, New Brunswick). This study is currently under review.</p> <p>The second phase to conduct detailed site assessments to meet federal funding requirements for capital investment is underway and projected to be completed this Fall. The site assessments will increase understanding of infrastructure capacity and development needed for implementing electric school buses and inform planning for the transition to electric school buses.</p>

Increasing Renewable Energy

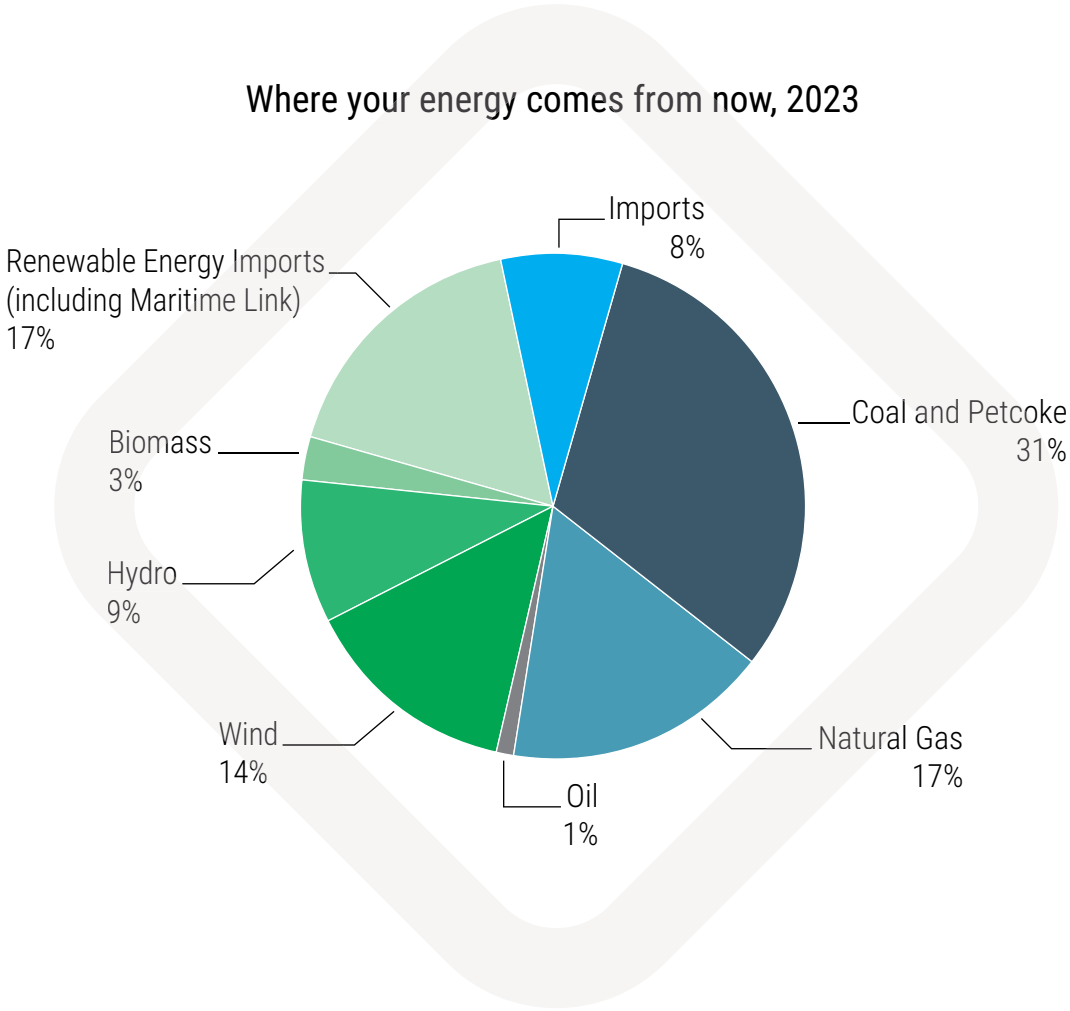
Nova Scotia is increasing the amount of renewable energy used for electricity generation. With an increase in the amount of renewables in our energy mix our province will:

- have an electricity system that is resilient to climate impacts such as hurricanes, forest fires, rain and flooding
- improve air quality and public health
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- and grow the clean economy by attracting new businesses

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Four:

By 2030, 80 per cent of electricity needs being supplied by renewable energy.

Nova Scotia is consistently increasing the proportion of its electricity generated from renewable sources. Currently, 42.5 per cent of the electricity consumed in the province is supplied by renewables.



Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that are Increasing Renewable Energy:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
18	Increase the amount of renewable energy used for electricity generation by building at least 500 megawatts of new local, renewable energy by 2026 and an additional 50 megawatts of new community solar.	<p>The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to increasing the amount of renewable electricity on our grid. Up to 1,020 megawatts of new, local renewable energy capacity is planned for construction by 2026. Some key highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 373 megawatts of new onshore wind projects, approved last year through the Rate Base Procurement program • 148.5 megawatts from a private wind facility by Port Hawkesbury Paper Wind • 50 megawatts from a private wind facility by Natural Forces • Up to 350 megawatts of wind energy is anticipated to be awarded through the Green Choice Program • Up to 100 megawatts of community solar power through the Community Solar program, which opened on March 1, 2024
19	Provide funding support for farms and other businesses to adopt more solar power.	The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables has funded EfficiencyOne to hire a Solar Navigator to help agricultural businesses. This Navigator will help farms, fisheries, and other businesses to lower their emissions and energy bills by adopting solar energy solutions.
34	Launch the Green Choice Program in 2023, which will allow government to purchase 100 per cent renewable electricity for our operations as it becomes available.	The Green Choice program is helping to accelerate our transition to cleaner electricity resources. Participants in the program will switch to 100 per cent green energy. The Green Choice program will help more Nova Scotians switch to green energy, including government buildings.

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
59	Issue leases for five gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030, with a first call for bids by 2025.	The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables is actively collaborating with federal partners and the future regulator, the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, to develop comprehensive legislative and regulatory frameworks. These frameworks will guide licensing and calls for bids in Nova Scotia's offshore wind sector. Additionally, the Department is engaging with stakeholders and rights holders to ensure the development process includes multiple voices and perspectives.
64	Launch the Green Choice Program in 2023, which will allow large industrial energy consumers to purchase 100 per cent renewable electricity as it becomes available.	The Green Choice Program launched in December 2023. Eligible customers and customer groups, consuming at least 10,000 megawatt hours per year, expressed their interest last year. The Request for Proposals for energy projects closed in June 2024, with awards expected to be announced in September. The application period for participants opened in the summer of 2023 and closed in March 2024. For more details, visit the Green Choice Program website .

Strengthening Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency plays a crucial role in meeting our climate targets, improving affordability for Nova Scotians, and creating healthier homes. This is why the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act and climate change action plan work together to improve energy efficiency across Nova Scotia.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Five:

Support, strengthen, and set targets for energy efficiency programming while prioritizing equitable access and benefits for low-income and marginalized Nova Scotians.

Since 2021, Government has invested at least \$229 million in energy efficiency programs. These initiatives help Nova Scotians transition away from oil heat and reduce their energy

consumption. Extra support is provided to low- and middle-income households and households in Mi'kmaq communities. In 2023, 12,506 Nova Scotians benefitted from programs like the HomeWarming, Home Energy Assessment, Mi'kmaw Home Energy Efficiency Program, and Affordable Multi-Family Housing Program.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that are Strengthening Energy Efficiency:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
22	Help Nova Scotians reduce their demand for electricity by continuing and expanding programs delivered by Efficiency Nova Scotia and their partners.	<p>In 2022, Government supported EfficiencyOne in administering their Demand Side Management Plan for 2023-2025, which was approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. The plan aims to reduce overall consumer demand for electricity which will reduce air emissions and benefit Nova Scotians by reducing energy bills.</p> <p>In 2023, EfficiencyOne's programs exceeded their targets. Across programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 131.6 gigawatt hours of electricity was saved, 109 per cent of the target • Energy demand was reduced by 27.6 megawatts, 103 per cent of the target <p>Additionally, programs funded by the Nova Scotia government reduced 22,723 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
23	Support businesses and communities in reducing their energy demand by expanding access to on-site energy managers and continuing support for energy efficiency programming for businesses.	<p>The Onsite Energy Manager program, delivered by EfficiencyOne, has been instrumental in assisting businesses and communities across Nova Scotia to identify energy savings and support applications to clean technology programs. Over the past year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program has grown by five energy manager positions, broadening support to sectors such as municipalities, universities, schools, hospitals, agriculture, seafood, and sport fishing. Since the launch of the climate change action plan, this expansion has resulted in a total of 16 additional onsite energy managers • The program has helped achieve significant reductions for the agriculture sector. In 2023, the program expanded by adding a second onsite energy manager focused on non-profit agriculture associations, including farmers' markets and exhibitions. One energy savings project was completed, resulting in an estimated reduction of 9.53 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year and energy savings of 15,131 kilowatt-hours per year • Work with the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture also resulted in significant savings within the seafood sector: 1,433,721 kilowatt-hours and 916 megatonnes of greenhouse gas emissions saved in 2023/24 • Plans are in place to add two new roles at the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture by spring/summer 2024, aimed at identifying additional sub-sectors within the seafood sector supply chain

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
24	Help new building developments install shared heating systems to make multi-building heating more efficient.	<p>The Halifax Regional Municipality is nearing the completion of designing the Cogswell Redevelopment Area, one of the most significant city-building projects in Halifax's history. This project is set to forge a stronger, more inclusive network of communities in downtown Halifax.</p> <p>The redevelopment is led by the Halifax Regional Water Commission. The district energy system will supply renewable energy from the nearby Halifax Wastewater Treatment Facility's wastewater effluent to six mixed-use buildings within the redevelopment area. This will improve energy efficiency, significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and ensure a stable, affordable, and clean energy source for the area for years to come.</p>
25	Review energy efficiency programming in Nova Scotia to see where programming has gaps or can be made better.	The review of energy efficiency programming in Nova Scotia will continue and can be supported by the new Independent Energy System Operator and the Nova Scotia Energy Board once they are established.
26	Reduce heating oil use by at least 20 per cent by 2030 by helping retrofit 60,000 homes and piloting a new off-oil program for homeowners to completely replace oil heating equipment with electric ones.	<p>Over the past year, Nova Scotia has seen substantial progress in reducing reliance on heating oil, with 14,273 homes undergoing retrofits, up from 8,506 homes last year. These efforts have led to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual reduction of 14,757 tonnes in annual greenhouse gas emissions and a first-year bill savings of \$17,008,618 • An approximate reduction of 5,395,612 litres in heating oil consumption. This represents another 1.9 per cent reduction in total heating oil use compared to 2019 in addition to last year's 3 per cent reduction <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
26	Continued	<p>These results stem from residential programs aimed at reducing energy usage and transitioning from oil heating to more efficient systems like heat pumps including the HomeWarming program, Affordable Multi-Family Housing program, Home Energy Assessment, Green Heat, Mi'kmaw Home Energy Efficiency program, and the Home Heating Research Pilot.</p> <p>The Province continues to work with the federal government to facilitate the transition from oil heating to electrical systems. For example, the HomeWarming program expanded in 2023 to include free heat pumps for low income, oil heated households. This expansion aligns with federal funding from the Home Heating Oil Transition Fund under the Low Carbon Economy Fund.</p>
27	Provide energy efficiency upgrades to more low-income households by expanding on programs such as HomeWarming and the Affordable Multifamily Housing program.	<p>Nova Scotians are moving from oil to heat pumps to heat and cool their homes because they can save money and reduce emissions. This year, the HomeWarming program had a substantial increase in interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,154 low-income homes received no-cost energy efficiency upgrades this year for a combined total of 3,477 homes since 2022 • Upgrades resulted in annual greenhouse gas emissions reductions of approximately 3,537 tonnes, energy savings of 52,763 GJ, and bill savings totalling \$2,369,135 (or ~\$1,100 per home, per year) <p>EfficiencyOne has also increased its capacity, improving application processing times and managing contractor demand for these programs. This enhancement has facilitated a more responsive customer service experience and added 27 heat pump contractors to the program.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
28	Continue with the Mi'kmaw Home Energy Efficiency Project and pilot a similar program for African Nova Scotian communities. Fast-tracking the transition to net-zero and climate resilient buildings.	<p>This year, the Mi'kmaw Home Energy Efficiency Project (MHEEP) successfully retrofitted another 261 homes for a total of 505 since 2022. These retrofits achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of 405 tonnes in greenhouse gas emissions, for a combined total of 894 tonnes in annual greenhouse gas emissions reductions since 2022 • Approximately \$240,137 in total annual bill savings (~\$920 per year, per home) <p>A pilot is being developed for African Nova Scotian communities focused on increasing access to EfficiencyOne programs, addressing barriers to participation, and providing customized support. Engagement activities have already seen participation from over 150 homeowners. These sessions have helped identify opportunities for improvement related to current EfficiencyOne programs, homeowner demographics, and accessibility challenges.</p>
31	Support the construction and renovation of net-zero homes and multi-unit residential buildings, including net-zero affordable housing.	The Departments of Natural Resources and Renewables and Municipal Affairs and Housing are working to design a program that will support the construction and renovation of net-zero affordable housing. The program is expected to launch this year.

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
32	Help owners of commercial and institutional buildings better understand their energy performance and plan for energy efficiency upgrades through voluntary energy-use monitoring.	<p>The Energy Efficient Commercial Building Rebates program, managed by EfficiencyOne, continues to provide incentives, financing, and expert advice for upgrading commercial buildings with energy-efficient products.</p> <p>The Voluntary Commercial Energy Benchmarking Program is now in its second of three years. The program helps building owners better understand their energy performance and plan for efficient upgrades.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65 customers have participated, representing 73 commercial and industrial buildings across Nova Scotia

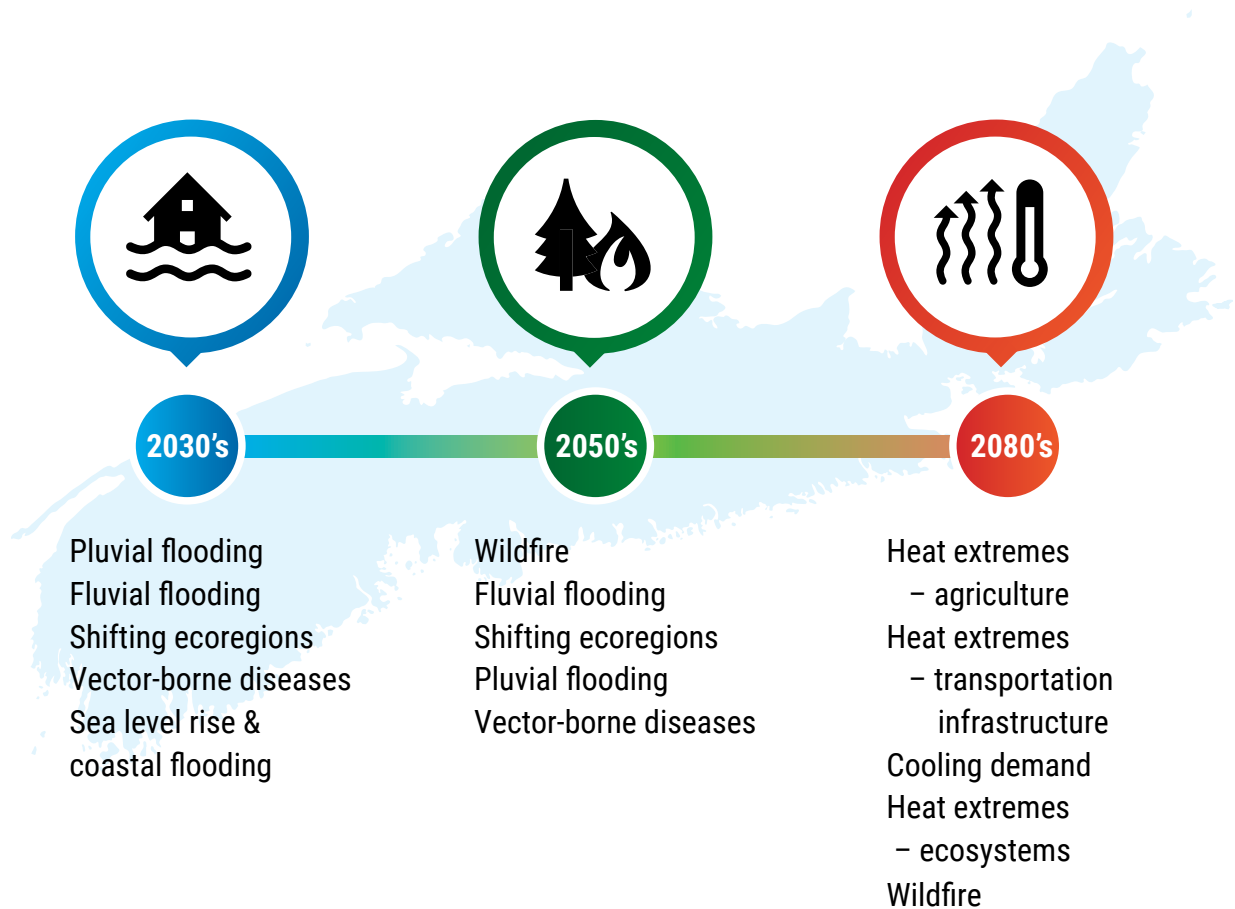
Understanding Climate Risk

The better we understand climate change risks, the more successful and sustainable our climate actions will be. The commitments below improve our understanding of climate change impacts, risks, and opportunities to act in Nova Scotia so we can prioritize efforts and adapt more effectively. While acknowledging the need for international cooperation, climate change risk assessments identify areas of concern, as well as opportunities and priorities for action within Nova Scotia.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Six:

Complete and release a province-wide climate change risk assessment in 2022, with updates in 2025 and every five years thereafter.

Nova Scotia’s latest climate change projections and risk assessment were released in December 2022. This assessment offers a clear picture of what Nova Scotians can expect over the next 80 years if global and local actions are not taken. Under a scenario where greenhouse gas emissions remain high, the graphic below shows the climate hazards that may impact our well-being as the climate continues to change. For more information on these, see [Weathering What’s Ahead: Climate Change Risk and Nova Scotia’s Well-being](#).



Work is underway now to update Nova Scotia's climate change risk assessment using the latest climate data, along with social, economic, and environmental information. The updated assessment is scheduled for release in 2025.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Help to Understand Risk:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
1	Build on the research findings of the climate change risk assessment to better understand the risks identified and research important data and information gaps.	Support continues to be offered to municipalities, provincial government departments, and other agencies seeking to use the findings from the 2022 provincial climate change risk assessment. This assistance is vital for preparing and responding effectively to climate change challenges.

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
12	Strengthen and coordinate responses to coastal and inland flood risk by investing in natural flood protection and implementing new regulations under the Coastal Protection Act in 2023.	<p>The Government is in the sixth year of a nine-year project aimed at upgrading and improving the provincial dykeland system. This initiative strengthens the resilience of dykes, reducing disaster risks, and protecting communities and farmlands for the next 50 years. Construction on five project sites is set to begin in the summer of 2024.</p> <p>In February 2024, Government released The Future of Nova Scotia’s Coastline: The plan to protect people, homes and nature from climate change along our coast, which has 15 actions for property owners, municipalities, and the Province to take to make coastal homes, communities, and natural areas safer.</p> <p>Tools available now for coastal property owners include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coastal Hazard Map, an interactive, online map, which shows Nova Scotians a worst-case scenario of coastal flooding in the year 2100 • A Resource guide for coastal property owners, which provides Nova Scotians with information on coastal hazards and actions they can take • Navigators, who can help Nova Scotians use the Coastal Hazard Map, understand the map, and direct them to more resources. The Navigators can be contacted at coastalnavigator@novascotia.ca or by calling 1-888-570-4240

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
15	Invest in infrastructure and natural systems to manage heat stress, such as tree planting in urban areas or heat pumps/cooling centres to lower exposure to high temperatures for vulnerable Nova Scotians and invest in ecosystem-based responses like coastal wetland restoration to help manage flooding.	<p>The Province is investing in projects through the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund to help with heat stress. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cape Breton Community Housing Association, which helps people with mental illness and those without homes in Sydney, received \$207,729. This funding will convert nine homes from oil-fired heating to electric heating and cooling

Phasing Out Coal-fired Electricity Generation

Phasing out coal-fired electricity generation is important for making our electricity sector into a more sustainable and environmentally friendly system. This change is a key part of reaching our greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and ensuring a cleaner, more sustainable future for everyone in Nova Scotia.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Seven:

Phase out coal-fired electricity generation by the year 2030.

In April 2023, the Premier selected the Clean Electricity Solutions Task Force to explore ways to modernize how we manage and regulate electricity. This group is key to helping us stop using coal for electricity by 2030 and achieve our climate goals. The Task Force's responsibilities include:

- examining electricity infrastructure needs for reliability, capacity, and storage to meet climate change goals

- evaluating how our electricity system links with other essential services like telecommunications
- reviewing regulations under the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board Act related to electricity generation, transmission, and rates
- engaging with experts, the Mi'kmaq, and other interested Nova Scotians

The Task Force published a final report with recommendations in February 2024. More information can be found on the [Task Force website](#).

Additionally, the Province announced the 2030 Clean Power Plan in the Fall of 2023, which serves as a strategic guide towards phasing out coal and achieving a 90 per cent reduction in emissions in the electricity sector by 2035. More information can be found [here](#).

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that are Phasing Out Coal-fired Electricity Generation:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
17	Create provincial regulations to phase out coal-fired electricity generation by 2030 with the goal of achieving at least a 90 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity sector by 2035.	<p>The Department of Environment and Climate Change is creating regulations to stop using coal for electricity by 2030, supporting Nova Scotia’s move toward cleaner energy. Key achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of March 2024, about 43 per cent of electricity produced by Nova Scotia Power comes from renewable sources • A significant reduction in emissions from the electricity sector in 2022, which were 45.9 per cent lower than in 2005, marking significant progress towards the 2035 goal of at least a 90 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emission from the electricity sector <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
17	Continued	<p>Nova Scotia's 2030 Clean Power Plan sets a vision for an electricity grid powered by a diverse mix of solar, wind, hydro and biomass by 2030. Additionally, converting some coal plants to gas will provide backup power during emergencies and ensure grid reliability.</p> <p>Nova Scotia also implemented the Output-based Pricing System targeting large industrial emitters and the electricity generation sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, seven companies with 15 facilities are registered under this system in Nova Scotia • Facilities must meet specific performance standard for emissions

Updating Building Codes

Buildings are the third largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Nova Scotia. Building codes change over time as science and best practices improve. Making buildings resilient and efficient is crucial for the well-being of Nova Scotians, taking action on climate change, and for the growth of the clean economy.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Eight:

Provincially adopt the 2020 National Energy Code for Buildings within 18 months of it being published by the federal government.

- This goal is reinforced in **action #30** in the climate change action plan.
 - Action #30 adds the requirement of adopting the 2020 National Building Code.

Nova Scotians planning new construction or renovation projects will have more time to adapt to upcoming new building code requirements in the province. Amendments to the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations, originally set to take effect January 1, 2024, will now be adopted at a later date to allow more time for education and training. The decision was based on public consultations to support the transition to the new requirements in the planning and development of projects.

Transportation Efficiency

An efficient and environmentally friendly transportation system is crucial for reducing problems like congestion and improving accessibility. By promoting and supporting efficient transportation options such as buses, ferries, community-based services, and active modes like walking, biking, and scooters, we can decrease our reliance on fossil fuels. This not only builds vibrant communities but also enhances access to essential services, goods, and opportunities. By offering a variety of transportation options, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide Nova Scotians with alternatives to relying solely on personal vehicles.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Nine:

The government will support the well-being of Nova Scotians through active transportation by

- (a) establishing a Provincial Active Transportation strategy to increase active transportation options by 2023**
- (b) completing Core Active Transportation Networks that are accessible for all ages and all abilities in 65 per cent of Nova Scotian communities by 2030**
 - This goal is reinforced in **action #43** in the climate change action plan.

The Department of Public Works is leading the development of the Active Transportation Strategy. This strategy is a joint effort involving several government departments, and a steering committee overseeing the development of the strategy.

Engagement with Active Transportation partners and users is a key part of the development of the Active Transportation strategy. During the Spring and Summer of 2023, both in-person and virtual meetings were held throughout the province, along with two webinars, an online survey, and 20 focus groups. In December 2023 and January 2024, physical activity coordinators with Nova Scotia First Nations were engaged for additional input. The Active Transportation Strategy will aim to organize and guide activities related to active transportation across government. Equity-deserving groups will continue to be engaged when Government moves to implement the strategy.

The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables continues to help communities develop and put into practice Core Active Transportation Networks. Currently, 36 communities have active transportation plans. Additionally, the Department of Public Works is adding parts of the Blue Route into its five-year highway plan. This includes paving 69.6 kilometres of shoulders for use by cyclists. The Department has also supported work on the Blue Route bicycle network, with approximately 503 kilometers open.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Contribute to Transportation Efficiency

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
39	Increase access to community transportation services for all communities outside of the Halifax Regional Municipality and Cape Breton Regional Municipality.	Community transit provides public transportation services run by non-profit organizations, municipal units, or First Nation communities to meet the needs of the rural community they operate in. 22 Community Transit Organizations now service nearly all areas outside the Halifax Regional Municipality and Cape Breton Regional Municipality, covering about 99.5 per cent of these regions. This wide coverage demonstrates the commitment to increasing access to environmentally friendly transportation options across the province.
42	Make transportation easier by developing new transportation efficiency strategies and reducing single-person vehicle trips.	<p>The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables is currently evaluating transportation efficiency efforts across Nova Scotia. This research aims to find gaps and explore new program opportunities that could improve transportation systems throughout the province.</p> <p>As part of this plan, the Department funded three strategic projects to improve transportation options in Nova Scotian communities and encourage people to use different ways to travel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with its delivery agent, the Department is growing active transportation programs in rural and equity-deserving communities <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
42	Continued	<p>For more information on these programs, click here Active Transportation projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A test project is underway to expand fixed-route transit services and try new fare structures in rural communities, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Community Transit Network • The Department is also helping Cycling Nova Scotia to complete designs for active transportation network projects New Glasgow and Wagmatcook

Improving Efficiency and Resilience of Government Buildings

Government is actively demonstrating leadership and contributing to greenhouse gas emission reductions by taking action on the commitments described below. This work not only addresses climate change but also creates jobs, and grows the clean economy.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Ten:

The Government will demonstrate leadership and contribute to greenhouse gas emission reductions by ensuring that:

- a) any new build or major retrofit in government buildings, including schools and hospitals, that enters the planning stage after 2022, is to be net-zero energy performance and climate resilient
- b) to encourage landlords who currently lease office space to government, to transition existing office space to meet net-zero energy performance
- c) to prioritize leased office accommodations in buildings that are climate resilient and meet net-zero energy performance starting in 2030
- d) to decrease greenhouse gas emissions across government owned buildings by 75 per cent by the year 2035
 - This goal is reinforced in **action #33** in the climate change action plan.

The Department of Public Works is doing energy audits on its main buildings to find out how much greenhouse gas emissions they produce. Of the 506 required energy audits to gather this data, 386 have been successfully completed.

In addition to these audits, Public Works is collaborating with landlords, especially in the Halifax Regional Municipality, to promote more sustainable practices and achieve neutral environmental footprints. Public Works’ current Request for Proposals includes an “added value” criteria, rewarding landlords who provide detailed plans on mitigating climate impacts. By 2030, the Department plans to prioritize leases in buildings that are climate resilient and meet net-zero energy performance standards as a commitment to environmental sustainability.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that are Improving the Efficiency and Resilience of Government Buildings:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
6	Review the infrastructure that Build Nova Scotia manages to assess climate risks and develop adaptation plans to reduce future damages from climate change.	Build Nova Scotia is exploring a potential approach to evaluate the impact of climate change on the approximately 159 properties it manages. This strategic assessment would be designed to safeguard infrastructure against evolving climate challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process may involve an initial in-depth assessment to identify potential hazard risks • Following the identification of high-risk or priority areas, detailed risk modelling and analysis could be conducted to develop a comprehensive hazard risk and infrastructure adaptation plan for each property

Working with Communities

The impacts of climate change are experienced most at the community level, where local groups often serve as the first responders. This is why working with communities to act on their climate change priorities is critical. By partnering with local stakeholders, we can better understand the best ways to respond to climate change events, making sure that our actions meet local needs effectively.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Eleven:

Work with Nova Scotian municipalities, First Nations and African Nova Scotian communities to take immediate and long-term action on their climate change priorities.

In April 2022, the Province announced a partnership with the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities to design and deliver the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund with \$15 million in funding for local action on climate change in Nova Scotia. The program supports community efforts to reduce or remove greenhouse gas emissions, or to prepare for and respond to the impacts of a changing climate. Due to the overwhelming interest in the fund and the growing need for communities to effectively respond to and prepare for climate change, the Province announced in September 2023, an additional top up of \$15.4 million and extended the fund to 2028.

The first call for projects was issued on November 7, 2022, where 26 projects from across the province received a total of \$7.8 million in funding, with 20 per cent directly benefiting First Nations and African Nova Scotian communities. For more information, including a list of the Round 1 recipients, visit the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund at <https://nschallengefund.ca/>.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Support Work with Communities:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
53	Provide funding through programs like the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund (SCCF) and support new community-based climate change coordinators to help municipalities, Mi'kmaq, and African Nova Scotian communities respond to their climate priorities.	<p>Round two of the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund was launched in October 2023, receiving 105 applications from municipalities, registered non-profits, post-secondary institutions, and First Nation Bands and Tribal Councils across the province. For more information on awarded projects through the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund, please follow https://nschallengefund.ca/successful-applicants/.</p> <p>On July 2nd, 2024, the Department of Environment and Climate Change announced a new partnership with MakeWay and the ENRICH Project to help African Nova Scotian communities across the province become more prepared to respond to climate change.</p> <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
53	Continued	<p>This collaboration builds on the initial support from the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund, which provided \$250,000 to develop climate change preparedness plans for 12 African Nova Scotian communities in order to help communities become more resilient to climate change impacts and advance environmental justice.</p> <p>The new partnership focuses on expanding local capacities through additional staffing and training, along with the development and execution of specific climate change initiatives.</p> <p>The Province invested \$6.6 million in the Community Climate Capacity program, delivered through the Clean Foundation. The program was created in 2023 as a pilot to help municipalities, community organizations, and Indigenous communities and organizations make their communities resilient to climate change. 19 municipalities and communities were welcomed to the program in May 2024 and will receive support to identify climate challenges, develop policy and planning initiatives, and help implement local adaptation and mitigation actions. Through knowledge sharing activities such as the Municipal Climate Learning Group and an annual summit, all municipalities will have the opportunity to benefit from the program.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
54	Provide funding to help more communities across Nova Scotia complete clean energy projects in areas such as buildings, transportation, electricity, and capacity building through programs like the Low Carbon Communities program and the Halifax Climate Investment, Innovation, and Impact (HCi3) Fund.	<p>In 2022-23, Government invested \$7.5 million in HCl3, an initiative aimed at making strategic investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promoting a net-zero Halifax.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the past year, HCl3 launched its second round of funding, and awarded \$528,756 across 16 projects. 5 of these projects were either led or co-led by an equity deserving group • HCl3 also secured funding from the McConnell Foundation to support equity and reconciliation efforts tied to climate change initiatives. More information can be found here • Some of the awarded projects in 2023 that will provide meaningful benefits to Nova Scotians include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The [Em]powering communities project, with Dalhousie University, which aims to provide the Halifax Regional Municipality with policy recommendations that identify pathways toward a just low-carbon energy transition o The Halifax-Dartmouth Ferry Emissions Reduction Analysis project, which will measure the actual fuel consumption and emissions under various operating modes. This will inform strategies for fuel switching and emission reduction options o The Electric Vehicle Charging Stations project, which will install two electric vehicle charging stations on the Akoma Holdings site, a Black-led non-profit organization that manages 320 acres of Black-owned land, to help green the property and educate the surrounding community on the value of green energy as a part of their overall development plan <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
54	Continued	<p>The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables launched the Low Carbon Communities (LCC) Program in May 2023, for another round of clean energy funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This call resulted in 31 clean energy projects receiving a total of \$1,820,282 in funding, with 11 projects led by equity-deserving groups • The program supports a wide range of applicants, including municipalities, First Nations and organizations, post-secondary institutions, businesses, and non-profit organizations, all working on clean energy projects that benefit communities • A new round of grant applications opened in May 2024, with funding awards expected by September 2024. More information can be found here
55	Continue to support federal-provincial partnerships on large infrastructure projects throughout Nova Scotia through programs like the national Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).	<p>In 2022, a federal-provincial partnership facilitated significant infrastructure development across Nova Scotia, with a total investment of over \$247 million through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.</p> <p>Since the last report, four additional projects have received federal approval, marking a substantial step forward in enhancing local infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipality of the County of Inverness - Inverness Active Transportation Network • Cape Breton Regional Municipality – Battery Electric Bus Purchase and Storage and Maintenance Facility – Phase 2 • Kings Transit Authority - Phase 2 Implementation of Electrifying Kings Transit • Halifax Regional Municipality - Halifax Transit Mill Cove Ferry Service - Phase 2 <p>The program has fully allocated all funding, and all projects have received federal approval. These projects are at various stages of implementation. For more detailed information on the program, visit our website on the Investing in Canada Infrastructure program.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
56	Create a new funding navigator position at the Department of Environment and Climate Change to connect Nova Scotians to climate change funding opportunities.	<p>The Funding Navigator service began in spring 2023 and continues to offer services to Nova Scotians. Key activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with individuals to help them navigate various funding programs and processes • Throughout 2023-24, 14 sessions were held, attended by 120 individuals from 18 departments and 2 crown corporations • Over 150 organizational representatives were invited to participate in strategic conversations aimed at building a deeper understanding of the climate funding application landscape in Nova Scotia. These discussions focused on hearing ideas on improving support options for those applying for funds and began the conversations on options for program development under the Funding Navigator umbrella

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate adaptation means taking action to reduce the impact of climate change and ensure that we have a resilient province for future generations. It also includes recognizing how our climate is changing so that we can position ourselves to respond to new and emerging opportunities.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twelve:

Build climate change adaptive capacity and resilience by requiring climate adaptation planning across government departments.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Contribute to Climate Adaptation Capacity:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
7	Increase climate change adaptation capacity across government by developing and implementing climate change adaptation strategies for all government departments.	<p>Currently, five departments are implementing adaptation action plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Agriculture hired a Climate Change Specialist to support the agricultural sector in preparing for climate change risks and opportunities. The specialist provided support through presentations, tradeshow, newsletter articles, and co-hosted climate sharing networking events • The Department of Agriculture in partnership with Perennia Food and Agriculture Corporation hosted the first Nova Scotia Climate Smart Farming Forum. Drawing over 130 participants to learn about climate change adaptation, regenerative agricultural practices and technologies to enhance resilience. Perennia also developed the Climate Smart Website, which provides essential information and resources to the public • The Departments of Environment and Climate Change, and Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage are upgrading equipment to safeguard government buildings against extreme weather events. Department of Environment and Climate Change is also updating guidance documents and engineering design tools • The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables is advancing coastal erosion monitoring to improve our understanding of coastal processes. They are also supporting staff education and beach management plans for more resilient coastal infrastructure <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
7	Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture is working closely with the seafood and sportfishing sectors to identify climate change vulnerabilities to support further adaptation strategies across the province
8	Increase climate change adaptation capacity in communities and business sectors by supporting them in hiring their own climate change coordinators to help develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies.	<p>Sectors are implementing their adaptation action plans with two years of funding and the support of the Department of Environment and Climate Change's adaptation team. Sectors related to archaeology, Christmas trees, cattle and sheep, and horticulture were supported by the Department of Environment and Climate Change to develop climate adaptation action plans.</p> <p>Organizations such as the Cape Sable Historical Society, Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia, Agri-Commodity Management Association, and Horticulture NS, have initiated adaptation projects. Adaptation projects include the expansion of the number of weather stations across the province to fill important weather data gaps, which help support farmers in better decision-making about farming practices and strengthen longer-term climate models.</p> <p>Funding is also being provided to Perennia to develop three new agricultural commodity adaptation plans. This year they will work with the Wild Blueberry Association and Fruit Growers Association and will add an additional sector in the upcoming year.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
10	Bring key partners together to plan for responses to multiple climate risks facing our natural, built, human, social, and financial systems.	<p>In February 2023, the government released The Future of Nova Scotia's Coastline: The plan to protect people, homes and nature from climate change along our coast. The plan focuses on empowering coastal property owners to make informed decisions, supporting municipal leadership and aligning resources with coastal protection.</p> <p>One way we are bringing partners together with resources is through the Coastal Navigators. Coastal Navigators are available to help coastal property owners understand potential risks and hazards on their property and what they can do to mitigate them. Contact the navigators at coastalnavigator@novascotia.ca or 1-888-570-4240.</p>

Ecological Forestry

The Government's goal is healthier forests today and for generations to come. Ecological forestry supports sustainable development.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Thirteen:

By 2023, implement an ecological forestry approach for Crown lands, consistent with the recommendations in "An Independent Review of Forest Practices in Nova Scotia" prepared by William Lahey in 2018, through the triad model of forest management that prioritizes the sustainability of ecosystems and biodiversity in the province. Also, by 2023, identify the percentage allocation of Crown land dedicated to each pillar of the triad model of forest management.

Nova Scotia is transforming the way forestry is done in the province to benefit biodiversity and the sustainability of ecosystems. The three zones recommended in the [forest practices review](#) are now in place on Crown land. The three zones make up the triad model and the percentage of Crown land dedicated to each pillar is 35 per cent in conservation zone, 55 per cent in mixed-use/matrix zone, and 10 per cent in high production zone. Through this long-term model, biodiversity is the priority on 90 per cent of Crown land. The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables is continuing this complex work with many experts and stakeholders.

Work is complete or underway on about 93 per cent of the review's 45 recommendations. Key achievements to date include:

- high production forestry zone established in January 2023
- old Growth Forest policy updated in August 2022
- silviculture Guide for the Ecological Matrix implemented in June 2022
- recovery plans complete for all species at risk under sole Nova Scotia jurisdiction

Other work includes:

- training for staff and forest professionals on methods under the Silviculture Guide for the Ecological Matrix has been completed and continues to be rolled out as required
- developing a new pre-treatment assessment program which is currently in the user testing phase required before final release
- work continues aligning Crown and private silviculture programs with ecological forestry
- a Forest Stewardship Planning guide has been developed. Consultation materials have been prepared and public consultation will be initiated shortly

Protecting Land and Using Nature-based Solutions

Protecting land and using nature-based solutions are ways for us to protect biodiversity, support physical, mental and emotional health, reach our net-zero emission commitments and improve the resiliency of the places we cherish.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Fourteen:

Conserve at least 20 per cent of the total land and water mass of the province by 2030 as protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, in a manner consistent with national reporting criteria. Support this goal with a collaborative protected areas strategy to be released by December 31, 2023

- This goal is reinforced in **action #14** in the climate change action plan.

The Collaborative Protected Areas Strategy: An Action Plan for Achieving 20 per cent was released in December 2023, charting a course for Government’s ambitious action to protect 20 per cent of Nova Scotia’s lands and waters by 2030. The strategy contains four overarching solutions and numerous supporting actions that will advance the protection of provincially administered and private lands, support Mi’kmaq-led conservation efforts, and leverage economic and community benefit. This goal complements national and international biodiversity commitments including those associated with the International Convention on Biodiversity.

Currently, 13.6 per cent of land and water or about 672,500 hectares is protected in Nova Scotia. This includes 13.1 per cent of Nova Scotia’s coastline. In October 2023, the Canada-Nova Scotia Nature Agreement was signed securing \$28.5 million in federal funding to support conservation activities. In December 2023, the Government announced the creation or expansion of 23 protected wilderness areas and nature reserves. This includes creating six new wilderness areas and expanding eight additional wilderness areas and nine new nature reserves, totaling about 14,000 additional hectares of new protected land.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that are Contributing to Protecting Land and Using Nature-based Solutions:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
16	Plant 21 million trees across Nova Scotia in partnership with the federal government’s 2 Billion Trees Commitment.	<p>The government signed an agreement-in-principle on tree planting with the federal government in February 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables developed project outlines and is partnering with the Clean Foundation to develop tree planting initiatives • The program is open to expressions of interest and has selected the first set of tree planting projects, to be carried out in 2024-25 • The program expects to plant around 700 thousand trees in fiscal 24/25

Supporting Clean Air

Maintaining clean air supports the health of Nova Scotians and removes pressure from our health care system.

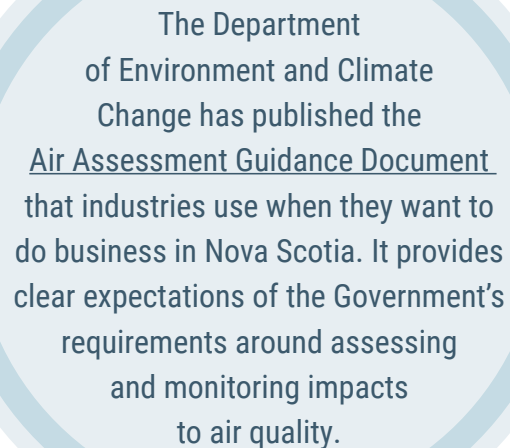
Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Fifteen:

Ensure Nova Scotians have clean air to breathe by

- (a) **managing Nova Scotia's air zones consistent with the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards.**
- (b) **reviewing and updating Nova Scotia's air emissions targets and ambient air standards by 2025 and continuing to review and update as required or every five years.**

Progressive air quality standards ensure clean air for the health of Nova Scotians and our ecosystems. Air zones in Nova Scotia continue to meet the [Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards](#). Learn more about air quality in Nova Scotia [here](#).

To support clean air, the Department of Environment and Climate Change continues to work on reviewing and updating Nova Scotia's air emissions targets and ambient air standards. Many other actions under the climate change plan also support clean air. For example, increasing renewable energy and phasing out coal-fired electricity generation will improve air quality.



The Department of Environment and Climate Change has published the [Air Assessment Guidance Document](#) that industries use when they want to do business in Nova Scotia. It provides clear expectations of the Government's requirements around assessing and monitoring impacts to air quality.

Clean Water

All life depends on clean water. This is why protecting and monitoring water safety is so important for the health of Nova Scotians, the ecosystems we walk, play and live in, and all living creatures.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Sixteen:

Improve drinking water safety and water quality in lakes, rivers, and groundwater by:

- (a) developing by 2026 provincial water quality objectives that will guide activities that affect water quality**
- (b) addressing by 2026 key barriers Nova Scotians face to testing and treatment of rural wells**

Nova Scotians are fortunate to be surrounded by marine and freshwater ecosystems. The Department of Environment and Climate Change continues to work to develop provincial water quality objectives to protect the quality of our water, while supporting development and considering climate change.

This past year the Department launched a media campaign to promote well water testing and raise awareness. The results of the campaign were analyzed to help inform the best approaches to spread awareness in future educational campaigns. The Department also developed a pilot study to understand how to improve accessibility to testing services and increase testing rates, which is planned to be completed in the Fall of 2024.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Plan that are Contributing to Clean Water:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
2	Improve municipal stormwater infrastructure by updating planning requirements and helping develop stormwater management plans.	<p>The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing is working with the Department of Environment and Climate Change to identify opportunities to update municipal engineering specifications for stormwater infrastructure, update planning requirements related to stormwater management plans, and identify areas of risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Request for Proposals for a province-wide Municipal Stormwater Needs Assessment has been released • Work associated with the Needs Assessment will take place through to December 2024 • Additionally, a grant was awarded to provide recommendations for local rainfall coefficients. Rainfall coefficients help us understand how much water may collect in a given area during storms. This is information that can be used to help design more resilient stormwater infrastructure
3	Improve the quality and availability of water-resource data for better water resource management and flood line mapping by upgrading provincial water monitoring networks.	<p>The Department of Environment and Climate Change previously completed a third-party analysis and evaluation of the Nova Scotia hydrometric network and identified gaps in network coverage, with recommendations for the installation of five new stations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locations for five new hydrometric monitoring stations have been selected and an agreement has been signed between the department and Environment and Climate Change Canada for the installation and operation and maintenance of these stations in fiscal 2024-2025 <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
3	Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department purchased water quality monitoring equipment to upgrade the existing ambient surface water quality monitoring program to ensure continuity and integrity of data <p>To date, 33 per cent of the province has undergone coastal inundation and floodplain mapping, which includes 22 primary watersheds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 municipalities have participated in this process • The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing continues to map more of the province and to share information with municipalities to incorporate into municipal land use planning <p>Further, thirteen direct contracts with consultants to carry out work supporting flood mapping throughout the province were awarded during fiscal 2023-24 totaling \$2.1 million. Four grants were also awarded to municipalities and two grants to not-for-profits totaling \$4.1 million to do data collection, research and stakeholder engagement to support flood mapping and adaptation. Included in this funding is the \$1.6 million announced in February to support the Future of Nova Scotia’s Coastline: The plan to protect people, homes and nature from climate change along our coast.</p>

Modernizing Environmental Assessments

Environmental assessments are an important tool for balancing clean economic growth, population increase and addressing climate change.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Seventeen:

Modernize the environmental assessment process by the end of 2024, including consideration of:

- (a) cumulative impacts**
- (b) diversity, equity and inclusion**
- (c) independent review**
- (d) Netukulimk**
- (e) climate change**

- This goal is reinforced in **action # 62** in the climate change action plan.

Our province is growing, and more companies in green industries want to come to Nova Scotia. Modernizing environmental assessment will help prepare Nova Scotia for a more sustainable future by making sure our economy can grow while still protecting our environment. In 2023, the Department consulted with Nova Scotians on modernizing the environmental assessment process; this feedback is now informing our work.

Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

Nova Scotia has a rich history of fishing and aquaculture which contribute to economic prosperity and social well-being. The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture aims to be a global leader in fisheries and aquaculture for the benefit of all Nova Scotians through innovation and sustainable growth of our sectors. In 2023-24 the Department developed, promoted, and supported Nova Scotia's fishing, aquaculture, seafood processing, and sport fishing industries.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Eighteen:

Support low-impact, sustainable aquaculture through a licensing process that weighs environmental considerations and includes provincial regulation for potential environmental impacts, animal welfare and fish health.

In March 2023, the Minister’s mandate commitment to review Nova Scotia’s aquaculture regulations was completed with the publication of the [What We Heard Summary Report](#) from the public, stakeholder and partner consultations, and the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee [Final Report and Recommendations](#). The Minister accepted the Advisory Committee report, which had 17 recommendations centering around three themes: Regulatory Rightsizing, Transparency and Public Participation. In 2023-24, the Department continued reviewing and analyzing required legislative and regulatory amendments to respond to the regulatory review recommendations.

In addition to the aquaculture regulatory review, the Department has taken multiple actions in 2023-24 to enhance their understanding of potential climate change impacts and provide mechanisms to help the fisheries and aquaculture industry adapt to and mitigate climate change:

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that are Supporting Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
4	Create a new fisheries and aquaculture climate change information hub to improve the sharing of climate change adaptation and greenhouse gas emissions reduction data and information in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.	The new Fisheries and Aquaculture Climate Change Information Hub Portal has been developed and will launch in 2024.

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
9	Support the fisheries and aquaculture sector to complete climate change vulnerability assessments on important infrastructure and develop sector-specific adaptation plans.	<p>The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture has made progress towards completing climate change vulnerability assessments and developing sector-specific adaptation plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is underway to complete a Climate Change Vulnerability assessment focused on the Nova Scotian aquaculture industry in 2024/25. A phased approach is being utilized, first assessing finfish aquaculture, then shellfish and aquatic animal health • A Nova Scotia Sportfishing Climate Change Vulnerability assessment will also be completed in 2024/25 • Several energy efficiency projects also happened this year at the three provincially owned fish hatchery sites such as installation of heat pumps in lieu of oil or inefficient electric heating, LED lighting, and efficient water pump technology. These projects reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the operations of the fish hatcheries
66	Create a new fisheries and aquaculture energy efficiency innovation fund and new fisheries and aquaculture climate change adaptation fund to help prepare the fisheries and aquaculture sector to reduce their energy use and better prepare for the impacts of climate change.	<p>The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture in partnership with EfficiencyOne created a new <u>Fisheries and Aquaculture Energy Efficiency Innovation Fund</u> which launched in June 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fund offers support to eligible applicants via four pathways: electrification, renewable energy, operational efficiency, and studies related to the other three pathways • The Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board has also launched a dedicated lending program to support eligible, successful applicants to the Fisheries and Aquaculture Energy Efficiency Innovation Fund, offering a reduced interest rate and dedicated lending from 2024/25-2026/27 <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
66	Continued	<p>The work with EfficiencyOne's Onsite Energy Manager program has expanded to help the seafood and sportfishing sectors use available funding and loan programs for clean and sustainable growth and cost savings.</p> <p>Progress is being made to create the new fisheries and aquaculture climate change adaptation fund which will help the sector better prepare for the impacts of climate change.</p>

Increasing Local Food Production

Producing and consuming more local food will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve nutrition and health outcomes, enhance food security, and support local farmers, processors, and retailers.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Nineteen:

Develop a Provincial Food Strategy for enhanced awareness, improved access, and increased local production to meet a goal of 20 per cent local consumption by 2030.

The Department of Agriculture continues to work collaboratively with its partners to enhance awareness of, improve access to, and increase the production of healthy local food, while developing a provincial food strategy. In partnership with the Canadian Agri-Food Foresight Institute, the Department is working to establish a baseline of the current percentage of money Nova Scotians spend on locally produced food. One finding of this work is that between 27 and 34 per cent of Nova Scotians' total food spending was on locally produced products in 2022. Going forward, the Department of Agriculture will continue to collect this data and use it to inform Nova Scotia's buy local programs and initiatives. The Department's Institutional Procurement Working Group is also doing work to increase local food consumption by developing and implementing local food pilot projects that increase access to local, healthy food in public institutions such as hospitals, schools, and long-term care homes.

Supporting the Circular Economy

In a circular economy, materials are kept in use for as long as possible, getting the maximum value from them. At the end of their service life, anything useful is recovered. Moving towards a circular economy is important because the Earth has limited resources.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty:


Encourage the growth of the circular economy, including expanding extended producer responsibility, reducing single-use plastics, and reducing solid waste disposal rates to no more than 300 kilograms per person per year by 2030. A plan will be developed by 2023 to meet this solid waste goal, including specific actions and interim targets.

Over the past year, Nova Scotians have been actively involved in shaping our approach to waste reduction. Through online and in-person forums, residents have offered valuable insights on reducing waste to achieve our target of 300 kilograms per person per year by 2030.

Over the last year, Nova Scotians were invited to participate in public engagement that focused on Nova Scotia's current waste disposal system and strategies for promoting the circular economy. The insights from these discussions are key in developing an affordable, solution-oriented plan.

We are finalizing a common-sense approach to reducing waste in Nova Scotia to 300 kilograms per person per year by 2030. We want to take our time to get it right. More information can be found [here](#).

In August 2023, the Department of Environment and Climate Change took decisive steps to bolster our waste reduction efforts by amending the Solid Waste Resource Management Regulations. This pivotal change introduced an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program for items such as batteries (less than 5kg), lamps, and small household electric appliances. The Department also launched a new Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation for packaging, paper products, and packaging-like products (PPP), demonstrating Government's commitment to sustainable waste management.



Waste audits were completed in 2022, 2017, 2012, and 2011. More information can be found [here](#).

Encouraging Sustainable Procurement

Sustainable procurement is an opportunity to use the substantial purchasing power of the government to support equity and local entrepreneurs, reward sustainable practices, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and benefit the circular economy.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty-one :

Demonstrate leadership in sustainable procurement by increasing innovation, sustainability, diversity and inclusion in government procurement, as well as consider community benefits attached to procurements.

Currently, the Department of Service Nova Scotia is preparing to implement the revised Sustainable Procurement Strategy which is geared towards “a holistic approach to government procurement that considers the environmental, economic and social factors related to the goods, services and construction that are procured.” It is a powerful tool to help the Government of Nova Scotia deliver on strategic priorities in key plans and policies.

Sustainable procurement adds relevant environmental and social considerations into the procurement of goods, services and construction, along with factors such as price, quality, service, and technical specifications. Sustainable procurement considers:

- reducing environmental impact from greenhouse gases, waste and toxins
- protecting our workers and clients with safer solutions and greener chemistry
- strengthening our communities through community benefits
- promoting inclusive economic development by purchasing from diverse suppliers and social enterprises and by considering accessibility
- supporting our youth by creating apprenticeship opportunities

Through sustainable procurement, the Government of Nova Scotia can achieve best value from the expenditure of public funds on the acquisition of goods, services and construction through maximizing competition, adopting commercially reasonable business practices, and conducting open, fair and transparent procurement processes. Sustainable procurement is a tool to generate social capital, human capital, natural capital, and built and economic capital, which contribute to strong, healthy and resilient communities.

The Department of Service Nova Scotia continues to support these goals through its standard specifications for procurement of goods, services, and construction.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Encourage Sustainable Procurement:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
38	Develop a greening fleets strategy for government vehicles.	Work on the greening fleet strategy is ongoing. A Request for Proposals is being prepared to develop a comprehensive strategy that will set the required standards, guidelines, schedule, and costing for modernizing and transitioning government’s broad range of provincial vehicles and equipment, infrastructure, policies regulations, and training programs. The study will include light-duty vehicles as well.

Doing Business in Nova Scotia

The Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act creates certainty and clarity for businesses who are considering the sustainability of their supply chain. The commitments below aim to encourage innovative, sustainable, and green businesses to thrive in Nova Scotia.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty-two:

Actively encourage innovative, sustainable and green businesses to establish or relocate to the province and promote an environment to enable innovative, sustainable and green business start-ups.

The Department of Economic Development, and Invest Nova Scotia, deliver multiple programs to support sustainable green businesses in the province. These programs include the [Innovation Rebate Program](#), [Early-Stage Commercialization Fund](#), [Payroll Rebate Program](#), [GreenShoots](#) and [AscendBio](#). In the last year, the Department of Economic Development and Invest Nova Scotia welcomed companies from multiple sectors including Renewable Energy, Oceans, Information and Communication Technology, and Financial Services into the province.

Highlights of the work by Department of Economic Development and Invest Nova Scotia include:

- supporting 16 innovative, green, and sustainable businesses to relocate to the province
- funding 26 innovative and green companies through the GreenShoots and AscendBio programs
- the attraction of Oneka Technologies which harnesses wave power to produce fresh water with zero greenhouse gas emissions

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Support Doing Business in Nova Scotia:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
13	Research natural carbon sinks to help offset any remaining greenhouse gas emissions needed to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.	The Net Zero Emerging Concepts and Technologies Research Program has completed two calls for projects and is planning two more calls in 2024-2025. Through the Nova Scotia program, 20 projects have been supported. For more information about the projects see: List of projects awarded from the June 2023 call and list of projects awarded from the November 2023 call .
57	Develop a clean investment plan that takes deliberate and strategic actions to ensure the Nova Scotia economy is prepared to respond to the needs of a low carbon economy.	The Clean Investment Plan approach was developed in May 2023. The plan involves implementing activities to enable Nova Scotia businesses and the local workforce to benefit from the transition to a low-carbon economy. Three projects were launched, which focused on offshore wind, other renewable energy, and green hydrogen.

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
58	Create a green hydrogen action plan by 2023 to support the development of the green hydrogen sector in Nova Scotia.	The Green Hydrogen Action Plan has been completed and was publicly released on December 15, 2023. It includes seven goals and 23 actions to support the domestic use and export of green hydrogen, including considerations of safety, developing a skilled workforce for the industry, research and innovation, and opportunities for public engagement.
61	Implement the Innovation Rebate Program and pilot a low carbon stream of the Early Stage Commercialization Fund through Invest Nova Scotia to create an environment that supports innovative businesses.	<p>The Innovation Rebate Program provides funding to help Nova Scotian companies grow and increase their competitiveness. This past year 25 projects received support from the Innovation Rebate Program. 72 per cent of the Innovation Rebate Program applicants indicate increased sustainability (e.g., reduced greenhouse gas emissions or reduced waste) as a potential outcome. You can learn more about these projects here.</p> <p>The Low Carbon Stream of the Early Stage Commercialization Fund helps researchers assess market potential, develop go-to-market strategies, perform strategic planning, develop intellectual property protection strategies, finish proof-of-concept development, build prototypes, and leverage other funds to advance clean technologies. Five projects have been approved in the Early Stage Commercialization Fund since it was introduced in 2021-2022. This past year, the fund supported researchers from Dalhousie University in a project focused on optical gas imagers to find methane leaks in oil and gas sectors.</p>

Supporting Businesses and Their Climate Action

Sustainable prosperity and climate action is a shared responsibility, but small businesses sometimes need resources to take on big change. The Government supports small businesses to reduce emissions and invest in more sustainable technologies and practices.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty-three:

Work with small businesses across the province and in all sectors to get their feedback on potential ways to further enable them to take action to reduce emissions, including through rebates, targeted investments and other supports.

- This goal is reinforced in **action #44** in the climate change action plan.

Together, the Department of Economic Development and Invest Nova Scotia administer programs for businesses in Nova Scotia, and actively pursue ways to refine and enhance support to help meet provincial economic and climate goals. This includes gathering feedback from program participants and other partners, monitoring performance metrics, and identifying areas for improvement.

In fiscal 2023-24, Invest Nova Scotia hosted sessions with local start-ups to discuss building out the business case for environmental and social initiatives and improving supply chain resiliency. In addition, the Minister of Economic Development met with over 66 businesses across various sectors to better understand their needs.

Invest Nova Scotia is also involved in several collaborative initiatives that support investment in the clean economy. This includes participating on the Clean Investment Plan Advisory Committee and participating in the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables working group to support the Clean Fuels Fund development and implementation. Invest Nova Scotia has collaborated with the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables on its Green Hydrogen Action Plan, helping to define examples of downstream hydrogen use, and making connections to Indigenous stakeholders for engagement.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Support Businesses in Taking Climate Action:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
50	Make sure professionals across Nova Scotia understand how they can participate in the clean economy and grow their businesses through new specialized training programs.	<p>The Department of Environment and Climate Change has a four-year partnership agreement with CLIMAtlantic to create training opportunities for organizations, businesses, municipalities, and government to adapt their sector or communities to climate change. This year, CLIMAtlantic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 19 information sessions with organizations representing groups and sectors that will participate in online learning modules • Developed a list of foundational modules to be offered to adaptation professionals seeking to further develop their skills • Identified and established a learning management system (hosted by Climate Risk Institute) for the online learning modules. The first module – Introduction to Climate Change – will be available in Fall 2024, and a full set of online and in-person training will be available by January 2025 <p>A complementary component of this work includes the formation of a climate adaptation community of practice launched in May 2024. This will help strengthen networks, identify opportunities with potential partners and better align adaptation work.</p>
60	Create a clean fuels fund to support industries and businesses in adopting low-carbon and renewable fuels such as green hydrogen, renewable natural gas, biofuels, and sustainable biomass.	<p>Through the new Clean Fuels Fund, the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables invested \$3 million in seven ready-to-launch clean fuels projects. The awarded projects will receive up to 75 per cent of project costs up to a maximum of \$1 million to do the work needed to transition to cleaner fuels for heating, transportation, and industrial processes. You can read about the successful projects here.</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
65	Extend the Clean Technology for Agriculture Program to allow more farmers to adopt clean technologies that support more sustainable farming.	The <u>Advancing Clean Technology Program</u> helps farmers and food processors improve their operations through the adoption of clean technologies and improved energy efficiency to increase value-added agricultural production, extend growing seasons, and improve costs of production. 18 projects were funded this year, resulting in an estimated 2,402 tonnes of emissions reduction.

Supporting Youth

Youth are the future of Nova Scotia. Like many Nova Scotians, they are experiencing climate anxiety, but they also have great ideas on how we can transition Nova Scotia to a sustainable future. They have the expertise to contribute to our climate efforts and we need to ensure that they have an opportunity to participate in the clean economy and have their voices heard.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty-four:

Support youth in Nova Scotia in engaging in the clean economy through sustainability-based youth employment leadership programs in Nova Scotia.

To support youth in Nova Scotia in engaging in the clean economy, the province funded the Clean Leadership Summer Internship Program which provides employment opportunities for young people to gain skills working within the clean economy. Over the summer 2023 internship season, the Clean Leadership Summer Internship Program helped 150 Nova Scotian interns work across the province with 86 different host organizations on 147 different projects contributing to the clean economy. In addition to the work experience interns gained from their host employers, emphasis was placed throughout the summer on skill development, professional and personal growth. The program is partially funded by the Department of Environment and Climate Change and administered by the Clean Foundation.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Support Youth:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
45	Support youth-centered climate actions and learn from youth through a new youth climate change advisory committee.	<p>The Department of Environment and Climate Change provided funding to Clean Foundation to create and support a Youth Climate Council. The Council provides input and recommendations to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on how to take action that is aligned with youth climate priorities. The council also supports youth across Nova Scotia in acting on climate change.</p> <p>The first cohort of the Youth Climate Council launched in September 2023. Some of the highlights from this cohort include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing a bursary program to support youth climate education • Hosting a youth climate summit with over 50 attendees • Meeting with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on multiple occasions to discuss youth climate priorities

Preparing the Workforce for the Clean Economy

An essential part of growing the clean economy is making sure the workforce has the necessary skills for the available jobs. This is why Government is supporting the advanced education and professional development of Nova Scotia's workforce.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty-five:

Collaboratively work with businesses, community colleges, and the labour sectors to modernize apprenticeship programs in Nova Scotia so the province has the tradespeople needed to meet the demands of the clean economy.

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency continues to modernize the apprenticeship system to better meet the needs of apprentices, those interested in working in the skilled

trades sector, employers, and industry. The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and the Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration will be collaborating with industry to identify transferable skills and upgrading from existing trades to meet the demands of a clean economy. We will also use the lens of supporting the clean economy when prioritizing which trades need upgrading and development. Examples of new provincial trades that will support the clean economy include Communication Technician and Architectural Cladder.

In April 2023, a provincial Microcredentials Framework was created that outlines a shared approach to microcredentials by government, industry organizations, and post-secondary education. Microcredentials are short-duration training courses that can help build careers and provide learning pathways for Nova Scotians that meet labour market needs. The framework also provides a common foundation for understanding microcredentials institutions and to guide the development and implementation of new programming.

Building on the Framework, the Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration has launched the Microcredentials Initiative Innovation Fund. In March 2024, 15 microcredentials projects co-developed and delivered by industry, training organizations, and post-secondaries were funded through a \$2 million federal investment. Many of the projects are directly related to the goal of preparing the workforce skill needs for a clean, sustainable economy, including: building tiny modular housing, digital adoption and literacy training for sectors needing to adopt new green technologies, building strategic leadership in primary industries to respond to and prepare for change, and composites manufacturing in the boat building industry. Currently, The Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) offers microcredential courses that support the clean economy, such as Climate Literacy for Construction, Electric Vehicle Safe Service and Maintenance, and courses related to clean technology and solar panel installation.

In October 2023, the Nova Scotia government announced the Actions for Accelerating Growth in the Skilled Trades in Nova Scotia to recruit, retain, and train more people in the skilled trades. A \$100 million investment over the next three years will accelerate growth in the skilled trades and modernize the entire apprenticeship and trades qualification system to meet the needs of a growing province.

Together, these actions will add up to 5,000 more new apprentices to the system in the next three years, increase the number of journeypersons and trades qualifiers by 1,000 a year, and increase the retention rate of apprentices from 43 per cent to 60 per cent within five years. In the last year, 2,524 new apprentices joined the trades.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Help Prepare that Workforce for the Clean Economy:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
51	Develop new industry training for advanced building techniques for engineering and design professionals to make sure these professionals are ready to build to new national energy and building codes.	<p>Through collaboration between the Departments of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Natural Resources and Renewables, a new pilot is being designed to assist and educate builders and will provide the data from the program to the Province to better inform training needs to support the adoption of the 2020 Codes.</p> <p>Department of Natural Resources and Renewables also funded the new <u>Building to Zero Exchange</u> to deliver on training priorities for the Buildings Industry. Priorities for 2024/2025 include: Building Officials Training, Integrated Design Process and Climate Literacy.</p>
52	Make sure we have the trade professionals needed and that they are prepared to meet the demands of the clean economy by modernizing the Nova Scotia apprenticeship program.	<p>In the last year, Nova Scotia was part of a national Red Seal “Green” committee that developed an overarching text for all trades’ Red Seal Occupational Standards to build awareness within industry and training providers about the importance of sustainability and green work practices. Specific trades were updated during the review cycle including updating the Red Seal Occupational Standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carpenters, to reflect the use of these environmentally friendly systems, including the selection of building materials and building techniques aimed at achieving increased energy-efficiency • Plumbers, to include skills and knowledges such as: environmental and health impacts, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) procedures, energy-saving practices, insulation practices, and technologies that reduce environmental impacts <p>Continued</p>

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
52	Continued	<p>Nova Scotia also continues to update training curriculum as part of the Atlantic Apprenticeship Harmonization Project. Some recent changes made or are under review include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the electric vehicle content in the Automotive Service Technician trade • Identifying technologies that reduce environmental impacts in the Carpenter trade • Increasing emphasis on using local and fresh foods and sustainable sourcing in Cook trade • Including green roof waterproof membranes in the Roofer trade

Encouraging Climate Change Education and Sustainability

Education can lead to more informed decisions and behaviour change. This is important for sustained climate change action and supporting a shift towards a cleaner economy that benefits everyone.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty-six:

Promote and support climate change education and sustainability through the knowledge and teachings of Netukulimk and environmental stewardship through ongoing curricula renewal and the development of inclusive and accessible resources and professional learning that incorporates diversity and honours Etuaptmumk.

- This goal is reinforced in **action #48** in the climate change action plan.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development completed a review of existing curricula from grades primary to 10. It identified outcomes in social studies and science courses that support climate change education and sustainability through the teachings of Netukulimk and environmental stewardship. A new course for high school, Netukulimk 12 was developed and piloted in the 2023/24 school year. This course is one of the science credits that students can use for graduation purposes.

The Netukulimk 12 course is expanding to seven new schools for the 2024/25 school year. The draft curriculum is complete, and new teaching and learning resources have been developed to support the expansion of the pilot for next year. Professional learning for the course includes Reconnecting with Wskitqamu which offers an authentic learning opportunity that nourishes the spirit, heart, and relationships with Wskitqamu (the land), Mi'kmaq communities, and culture. An Elder Advisory Committee has been established to provide additional support for teachers.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Encourage Climate Change Education and Sustainability:

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
5	Help homeowners understand and respond to climate risks such as flooding.	The <u>Resilient Home Retrofits pilot program</u> , administered by the Clean Foundation, is working with two municipalities – Halifax Regional Municipality and New Glasgow. Ten homes in each community have been identified to participate. Over the next year, these homes will receive retrofits to improve their resiliency to climate impacts. Lessons from these retrofits will be collected and presented to governments and stakeholders. The program is funded by the Department of Environment and Climate Change.
11	Raise awareness of climate risks and adaptation priorities across Nova Scotia through public education and engagement on the results of the climate change risk assessment and other important climate change data and information.	CLIMAtlantic Inc. is building on its work to provide climate data information to communities, industries, and government to enhance public education and awareness. The Nova Scotia Climate Specialist supported 166 service requests in 2023-24, up from 122 received the previous year.

Equity, Climate Action, and Addressing Environmental Racism

Nova Scotia has a troubling history of environmental racism that continues to cause harm and trauma to Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotia communities, and others whose voices are too often not heard or listened to. This was unacceptable then, and it is unacceptable now.

Sustainability is impossible without equity because climate impacts will make inequities worse if we do not consider equity in our actions. This is why equity is a principle in the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act and is applied to all commitments and actions.

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal Twenty-seven:

In 2022, initiate work with racialized and marginalized communities to create a sustained funding opportunity for climate change action, and support community-based solutions and policy engagement.

- This goal is reinforced in **action #47** in the climate change action plan.

The government continues to explore ways to support climate action through partnerships with racialized and marginalized communities. This includes:

- awarding a minimum of 15 per cent of funds under the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund towards projects led by Indigenous and/or African Nova Scotian communities. Last year, the program exceeded this target (20 per cent)
- providing ongoing support for the [Clean Foundation's Climate Change Leadership Program](#), which supported 150 interns in 2023. Of these interns, 19 per cent identified as Indigenous, 15 per cent identified as Black, African Nova Scotia or of African descent, and 9 per cent identified as persons living with a disability
- retrofitting 261 homes throughout the [Mi'kmaw Home Energy Efficiency Project](#)
- supporting climate change coordinators in Indigenous and African Nova Scotian communities to help with community-led projects

Government takes this work very seriously. Addressing environmental racism and climate change inequities impacting racialized and marginalized communities is a priority, which is why we put in legislation under the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act.

**Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act Goal
Twenty-eight:**

Create a panel to address environmental racism by the end of 2022 with recommendations for redress coming to the government by the end of 2023.

Government appointed eight experienced community leaders with a broad range of expertise to make recommendations to Government on actions to address this historic wrongdoing. This is the first time a panel of this nature has been formed to address historic environmental racism in Canada. The Panel has undertaken significant time and care to develop recommendations to address inequities with racialized and marginalized communities and shared their draft report with the Department of Environment and Climate Change and the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism. Government is taking the time to thoughtfully consider the draft report and recommendations.

Progress on Actions in the Climate Change Action Plan that Support Equity and Climate Action

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
46	Make sure that diverse voices from across Nova Scotia and abroad are advising the Government on climate adaptation research, planning, outreach, and strategy.	The Department of Environment and Climate Change is bringing diverse voices and expertise to the table to provide perspectives and expertise on climate change impacts and adaptation actions in their communities. This will help ensure underserved and underrepresented communities can benefit from adaptation initiatives. Approximately thirty advisors, selected in consultation with other government departments, will advise on climate adaptation activities relating to climate adaptation strategies and implementation, equity and intersectional impacts, and data assessment activities.

Action #	Action	Highlight/Milestone
49	Increase the representation of racialized and Indigenous workers in the energy efficiency and clean technologies sector.	The <u>Clean Energy Training Program</u> offers energy advisor training to a yearly cohort of 10 participants who identify as racialized or indigenous. This program also includes the <u>Custom Employment Support Training Bursary</u> for qualified individuals to access clean energy training, as well as a wage subsidy.