

French-language Services Plan

2021–2022

Environment and Climate Change

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French-language Services Plan
Department of Environment and Climate Change
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Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change

Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2021-2022 »

Message from the deputy head or CEO

On behalf of Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change, I am pleased to present our French-language Services Plan for 2021-22.

This past year has been challenging for all Nova Scotians, with the COVID response driving much of our work. We were proud to be able to partner with the rest of government in delivering COVID information in both official languages. Environment and Climate Change (ECC) recognizes and values the importance of giving Nova Scotians access to departmental programs and services in their choice of English or French. We continue to build our capacity to meet the needs of our Acadian and francophone community, with a strong departmental French Language Services policy. We continue to support our staff to attend French training courses and will continue to translate important information related to health, safety and security of our citizens and communities. ECC is committed to providing access to government information, programs and services in French for Acadian and Francophone Nova Scotians.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, as we continue to improve our service delivery to Acadians and francophones across the province. We welcome comments and suggestions from all Nova Scotians on our French Language Services.

– Deputy Julie Towers, March 2021

What we're doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and francophone community

We recognize the importance of French-language services and we endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations. We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French, and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programmes, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. To achieve this aim, we collaborate with other designated public institutions across government – including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie – through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. We greatly value this partnership, which ensures a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province's Acadian and francophone community.

We encourage Nova Scotians to request services from government in French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard by participating on agencies, boards and commissions, which are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office ([Applying for Agencies, Boards and Commissions \(ABCs\) | novascotia.ca](#)). As we continue to maintain and improve our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress and we invite you to share with us your comments or questions by contacting our French-language services coordinator.

French-language services coordinator:

Andrew Morrison (Andrew.Morrison2@novascotia.ca, 902-219-1686)

Services we offer in French

ECC ensures that every province-wide public consultation has at least one option for participation in both English and French. Additionally, we provide key documents to the public in both languages. The French versions of these documents can be found here: <https://novascotia.ca/nse/resources/publications-fr.asp>. Other French-language Services we provide include the following:

- Well water testing advice in both languages (<https://novascotia.ca/well-water-testing/>)
- News releases in both languages where appropriate, for example
 - Blue-green algae blooms
 - Boil water advisories
- Bilingual Court forms, such as Summary Offence Tickets, are used when available
- Documents from Federal/Provincial Partnerships are often available in both languages, for example:
 - Work with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
 - National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice
- Translation and Interpretation services as required through Communications NS.

How we communicate with the public in French

ECC makes every effort to respond to French inquiries in French. We have identified staff members who have the ability and willingness to provide services in the French language, in response to both verbal and written requests from the Acadian and francophone community.

When a request is beyond the capacity of these staff members to effectively respond in the French language, the staff member is directed to use the services available through the Communications Nova Scotia translation service or by contacting the French-language Services Coordinator. From there, proper channeling of the request is completed to ensure an adequate response is provided.

What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2020–21

Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administrative frameworks

Goal 1: Review current Environment and Climate Change's French-language Services. During 2020, ECC's Executive Policy Committee approved the ECC French Language Services Policy. This policy supports the *French Language Services Act*, providing direction to the department as well as resources such as internal French Language resources and an inventory of current French Language services. The creation of this policy superseded the need for a French-language Services Coordinator factsheet (part of Goal 2.2 in the FY 2020/2021 plan).

Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programmes to the public

Goal 2.1: Maintain current levels of service as appropriate. ECC continued to:

- provide verbal and written responses to French requests,
- make key consultations, media releases, and other communications materials available in French, specifically those relating to health, safety and security,

- support staff with French-language training options, with staff taking over 15 courses, and
- ensure information that is of relevance to the Acadian and francophone community is made available in French.

Goal 2.2: Improve Environment and Climate Change's French-language service delivery. ECC:

- translated additional documents, and
- updated the list of departmental French Language resources and inventories.

Objective 3: Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community

Goal 3: Strive to make multiple points of French-language communication available to the public. ECC continued to:

- ensure that any major consultation exercises consider French-language services, such as the Protected Wilderness Areas public consultation,
- provide health, safety and security information to the public in both languages, across all relevant media, and
- encourage the Acadian and francophone communities to request services in the language of their choice.

How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2021–22

Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administrative frameworks

Goal 1: Maintain current Environment and Climate Change French-language Services. ECC will:

- monitor the implementation of the ECC FLS policy (2020).

Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programmes to the public

Goal 2.1: Maintain current levels of service, as appropriate. ECC will continue to:

- provide verbal and written responses to French requests,
- make key consultations, media releases, and other communications materials available in French, specifically those relating to health, safety and security,
- support staff with French-language training opportunities, and
- ensure information that is of relevance to the Acadian and francophone community is made available in French.

Goal 2.2: Improve Environment and Climate Change's French-language service delivery. ECC will:

- review current public programs and services to identify French Language gaps, with a view to prioritising applications to the *Canada–Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services*,
- conduct annual update of departmental French Language resources and inventories.

Objective 3: Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community

Goal 3: Strive to make multiple points of French-language communication available to the public. ECC will:

- ensure that any major consultation exercises consider, and where appropriate, incorporate French-language services,
- provide health, safety and security information to the public in both languages, across all relevant media,
- encourage the Acadian and francophone communities to request services in the language of their choice through Active offers (Bonjour! Program), and
- encourage a diversity of participation, including Acadian/francophone members, on ECC agencies, boards and commissions when vacancies exist, including:
 - Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity,
 - Environmental Assessment Review Panel (when convened), and
 - Resource Recovery Fund Board (Divert Nova Scotia).