



SIERRA CLUB ATLANTIC

MEDIA RELEASE

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NS SHOULD KEEP “ENVIRONMENT” IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS AND SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY ACT

Halifax, NS – Sierra Club Canada – Atlantic Canada Chapter is concerned that proposed amendments to the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, which passed Second Reading in the legislature on Tuesday night, removes “environment” from key parts of the Act. Bill 136 will go before Law Amendments Committee shortly before returning to the House for Third Reading.

“At a time when we face so many massive environmental issues and environmental laws are being eroded at the federal level, it is important to keep environment top-of -mind when setting goals,” says Gretchen Fitzgerald, Director of the Atlantic Canada Chapter of Sierra Club, “I see no reason why environment could not have remained in the Act as a premise for setting goals while including mention of a green economy.”

The Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act makes a commitment that Nova Scotia will become one of the most environmentally and economically sustainable places in the world by 2020.

“We have all the elements we need here to achieve this ambitious goal of becoming world leaders, however, we need to stand fast to our commitment to protect the environment as an integrated part of our society: this is the current Act’s strength and I would hate to see it diminished.” states Fitzgerald.

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Backgrounder: Amendments removing the reference to “environment” in Bill 136 (http://nslegislature.ca/index.php/proceedings/bills/green_economy_act_-_bill_136)

EGSPA 2007 Now Reads	Changes Proposed, Bill 136
<p>4 (3)(b) establishing environmental goals and interim goals for different sectors of the economy of the Province for the purpose of meeting the environmental goals for the Province referred to in subsection (2);</p>	<p>Clause 4(3)(b) of Chapter 7 is amended by</p> <p>(a) striking out "environmental" in the first line; and</p> <p>(b) striking out "environmental goals" in the third line and substituting "goals for sustainable prosperity".</p>
<p>4 (3)(c) establishing additional environmental goals from time to time;</p>	<p>(4) Clause 4(3)(c) of Chapter 7 is amended by striking out "environmental" in the first line.</p>
<p>8 (1) The Governor in Council may enter into agreements with the Government of Canada or the government of a province of Canada, any agency of the Government of Canada or of the government of a province of Canada or any other person for the purpose of undertaking co-operative, complementary or compatible actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or meet other environmental goals set out in this Act and the regulations.</p>	<p>(1) Subsection 8(1) of Chapter 7 is amended by striking out "environmental goals" in the fifth and sixth lines and substituting "goals for sustainable prosperity".</p>
<p>8. 2) The Governor in Council may not enter into any agreement under subsection (1) unless the Governor in Council is satisfied that the agreement will be consistent with this Act and with the environmental goals for the Province established by this Act and the regulations.</p>	<p>(2) Subsection 8(2) of Chapter 7 is amended by striking out "environmental goals" in the third line and substituting "goals for sustainable prosperity".</p>

EGSPA 2007 Now Reads	Changes Proposed, Bill 136
	<p>2. (a) the Province adopts and implements a framework to support a transition to cleaner sources and sustainable uses of energy to produce greater economic, social and environmental benefits for Nova Scotians by supporting and enabling</p> <p>(ii) sustainable transportation options,</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> Good. We recommend a timeline for this: by 2015.</p>
<p>(b) the Province will adopt emissions standards for greenhouse gases and air pollutants from new motor vehicles, such as the standards adopted by the State of California by the year 2010;</p>	<p>(e) the Province continues to work with other levels of government on national emissions standards for greenhouse gases and air pollutants from new motor vehicles, such as the standards adopted by the State of California;</p>
	<p>2 (f) greenhouse gas emissions are, by 2020, at least 10 per cent below the levels that were emitted in 1990, as outlined in the New England Governors/Eastern Canadian Premiers Climate Change Action Plan 2001;</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> We had recommended incorporating long-term targets: "Amend ghg emission standards to account for changing scientific advice from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which recommends decreasing ghg emissions by 25-40% by 2020 and 80-95% by 2050." This is important, as there are projects under consideration right now, such as the Donkin coal mine¹, which have ~30 year timelines and will impact our ability to meet long-term targets. We need to think about these targets <i>now</i>.</p>

<p>2. (c) emissions of nitrogen oxides will be reduced by twenty per cent by the year 2009 relative to emissions in the year 2000;</p> <p>(d) sulphur dioxide emissions will be reduced by fifty per cent by the year 2010 from sources existing in 2001;</p> <p>(f) mercury emissions will be reduced by seventy per cent by the year 2010 relative to 2001 levels;</p>	<p>2 (g) emissions of nitrogen oxides are reduced by i) 20 per cent by 2009, (ii) 28 per cent by 2015, and (iii) 44 per cent by 2020, relative to emissions in 2000;</p> <p>(h) sulphur dioxide emissions are reduced by (i) 50 per cent by 2010, (ii) 58 per cent by 2015, and (iii) 75 per cent by 2020, relative to the 1995-2005 emission allocation;</p> <p>(i) mercury emissions are reduced to no more than i) 110 kilograms by 2010, (ii) 100 kilograms by 2011, (iii) 85 kilograms by 2013, (iv) 65 kilograms by 2014, and (v) 35 kilograms by 2020</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> According to NS Power, they are already at 94.4 kg in 2011. We recommend regulations for fines if targets are not met, as an added incentive.</p>
<p>2 (k) a comprehensive water-resource management strategy will be developed by the year 2010;</p>	<p>2 (m) a comprehensive water-resource management strategy is developed by 2010 and implemented accordingly;</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> We also recommended: Include commitments in new Natural Resources, Water, Coastal, etc. Strategies in the amended EGSPA. For instance, targets for reducing clear-cutting, stopping whole tree harvesting, to identify ecologically significant water resources, develop water budgets, etc. would be tied to deadlines laid out in the Act.</p>
<p>2 (l) wastewater treatment facility discharges will be provided at least primary treatment by the year 2017;</p>	<p>2 (n) wastewater treatment facility discharges undergo at least primary treatment by 2020;</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> Would rather not have seen this extended. Environmental Canada</p>

	<p>estimates that benefits of up-grading to upgrading to secondary treatment are three times the costs. However, there needs to be a strategy to get this done.</p>
	<p>c) an updated energy efficiency rating system for new and existing homes is available in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations made under the Building Code Act;</p> <p>(d) all new residential dwelling units constructed in the Province after January 1, 2011 are required to meet energy conservation measures adopted in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations made under the Building Code Act;</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> Good. There is huge potential for jobs in energy efficiency and renewables. We recommend targets for home audits (100% of existing homes in the province audited for energy efficiency by 2030; with interim targets of 15-25% of homes by 2015, 50% by 2020).</p>
	<p>2 (s) the Province develops a strategy by 2014 to advance the growth of the green economy, and implements the strategy accordingly;</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> This is what we asked for, to make a Green Jobs Strategy by 2014-2015</p>
<p>6 (1) The Minister shall review the goals set out in this Act and the regulations that relate to the environment and sustainable prosperity and shall report annually to the House of Assembly on the progress made toward achieving those goals and on anything that the Minister considers should be brought to the attention of the House in relation to</p>	<p>6(1) The Minister, in consultation with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, the Minister of Energy, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, the Minister of Natural Resources, the</p>

<p>goals for the environment and sustainable prosperity.</p>	<p>Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, as appropriate in relation to their respective mandates, shall review the goals set out in this Act and the regulations and activities of all Provincial government departments that relate to sustainability and shall report annually to the House of Assembly on the progress made toward achieving those goals, on the adequacy of the goals and on anything that the Minister, or any of the ministers who are consulted, considers should be brought to the attention of the House in relation to the long-term objective of sustainable prosperity.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> This is a step in the right direction, although would have preferred Premier Report on this Act. We think this change, in part addresses the concerns that the Roundtable expressed regarding the need for comprehensive engagement in the EGSAP on the part of government.</p>
	<p><i>Additional Comment:</i> The Act should include a target for developing and performing triple bottom-line accounting at the provincial level by 2015. These triple bottom line accounts would be presented to the House, just as the monetary Budget is presented today. The NDP Party promised to incorporate GPI analysis as one of its commitments to in response to a questionnaire from the environmental community before the last election: <i>"The NDP will work with GPI Atlantic to incorporate Genuine Progress accounting into provincial policy analysis."</i></p>

ⁱ Donkin Operations' ****** estimated Contribution to Provincial GHGs : •1,400,000 tonnes ghg emissions, 6.8% of current provincial emissions, 58% of Canada-wide emissions from coal mines

*(**This does not include emissions from burning coal, and we do not know how much will be burned locally)*

Depending on mitigation required, this could contribute b/n 2.6 – 8 % of the 2020 target, 8.8-27.4% of the lower (75%) 2050 target or 14,7-45.7% of the more ambitious (85% reduction) target.