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**Ecology Action Centre Presentation on Bill No. 213  
The Sustainable Development Goals Act**

We would like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered here today on the unceded and unsurrendered territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

I am Marla MacLeod, Managing Director of the Ecology Action Centre. I am going to speak more broadly to the Sustainable Development Goals Act and then my colleague Meghan McMorris, Community Energy Coordinator, will speak more specifically to our proposed amendments.

We, the Ecology Action Centre, welcome the renewal of EGSPA, now titled the Sustainable Development Goals Act. We think it is highly beneficial for a society to set some strong environmental, economic and social goals and develop consensus around those goals. EGSPA has done much for Nova Scotia and a renewed Act can do even more in this time of climate emergency, biodiversity crisis and reconciliation. We believe the Act has benefitted rural and urban Nova Scotia and we would ensure that this continues to be the case.

We welcome the recognition in this Act that sustainable prosperity is important to all Departments and that there is a defined role for the Premier. As noted by the Roundtable in their letter, the Sustainable Development Goals Act needs to be at the centre of government operations and policy. There is a clear opportunity to integrate the work of the One Nova Scotia Initiative and that of Sustainable Development Goals Act.

We support an annual progress report and a five year review of the Act.

We welcome the renewal and expansion of the roundtable membership. It is critical to have Mi'kmaq, African-Nova Scotian and youth representation at the table. We applaud the sentiment of the inclusion of Netukulimk. We urge authentic consultation with Mi'kmaw communities to fully understand this concept and what it would mean for public policy to implement it fully. We would encourage the province to follow BC's lead and adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We support the title of the Act if the Government is serious about sustainable development. This would include transitioning to a low carbon, green and inclusive economy. This transition needs to happen if we are to address the climate and biodiversity crises and address environmental racism in Nova Scotia.

We do not support creating regulations for the purpose of moving most of goals into the regulations. The original architects put the goals in the Act for a reason. As legislators you can understand the heightened value of having the goals in the Act.

We are proposing 13 new goals for the Act. Some of them are new areas that issue forestry or environmental racism, others are updated versions of existing goals in the Act (both achieved and in progress). We have provided you with a copy of these proposed goals.

We would like to talk specifically about the climate goal. With the adoption of strong climate goals we see the opportunity for the Government of Nova Scotia to work closely with the Federal Government and in particular take advantage of any funding programs.

We also support robust in person consultation on all goals and the rest of the Act. We realize that the time for action on climate was yesterday, but thoughtful and open consultation is important for creating social license and as much consensus as possible. We would suggest that the consultations start as soon as the House rises.

Our first proposed amendment is to Section 7(b) which currently states that the Provincial government will legislate a greenhouse gas emissions target of 53% below 2005 levels, by the year 2030. We, the Ecology Action Centre, propose that the target be amended to 58% below 2005 levels, by the year 2030.

We applaud the government for setting a target of net-zero emissions by the year 2050, but sections 2.4.1-2.4.3 of the IPCC Report clearly state that "the rate at which we decrease GHG emissions will determine whether or not we overshoot 1.5°C or 2°C of global temperature rise". 'Overshoot' refers to a peak followed by a decline in global warming<sup>2</sup>.

The speed at which we move towards a target of net-zero emissions in 2050 will also determine the extent of the impacts of climate change on Nova Scotia. Therefore, a faster decline in GHG emissions, and a target of 58% below 2005 levels by 2030, will create a higher chance of staying within 1.5°C of global warming, and decrease the potential impacts of climate change within the province.

While all jurisdictions must reduce their GHG emissions, both the IPCC Report and the Paris Agreement state that our emission reduction targets must reflect our fair share. The consideration of jurisdictions doing their fair share comes from the concept of "common but differentiated responsibilities", which was enshrined in the internationally agreed upon United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in 1992. Almost 30 years later, it remains a core piece in 18 sections of the IPCC Report and Article 2 of the Paris Agreement.

According to the independent and scientific analysis, of Climate Action Tracker, a GHG emissions reduction target of 58% below 2005 levels in the year 2030 would represent Canada, and its jurisdictions, fair share<sup>ii</sup>. Furthermore, it is the *minimum* necessary reduction required to be compliant with a 1.5° C global warming target.

Finally, according to a report done by economic consultant Gardner Pinfole, we know that Nova Scotia stands to benefit from almost \$9.8 Billion in added GDP between now and 2030, if it sets a GHG target of 58% below 2005 levels by 2030. Of that \$9.8 Billion, nearly \$6.3 Billion would be added income for Nova Scotians.

Our second proposed amendment is to Section 14 (1) of Bill 213, which refers to public consultations. We propose that it be amended to explicitly specify that the consultations be in-person and participatory.

The IPCC Report states that climate planning and action must be "...implemented in a participatory and integrated manner" (4.3.3, 4.4.1, 4.4.3).

Taking a participatory approach to consultations would involve:

- Knowledge sharing
- Using existing community and sector relationships (i.e. community and network relationships)
- Respecting and leveraging community strengths and resources
- Including communities in the design of the consultations
- Engaging in co-learning and capacity building
- Raising the voices of underrepresented communities and communities currently subject to environmental racism
- And holding consultations based in treaty.

All communities are different. The IPCC emphasizes this in its call to action to have governments pursue "place-specific" pathways, as they have the highest potential for also increasing the well-being of a place (5.3.3). Communities have different strengths, economic realities, comparative economic advantages, power dimensions, existing networks and community groups, concerns about climate change, and needs for climate change education, mitigation and adaptation. The IPCC Report emphasizes that there will be robust differences in the effects of climate change between regions and communities. For this reason, all communities in Nova Scotia must be engaged fully and in a participatory manner, so that sustainable development can occur within the context of their differentiated situations and realities.

Many communities in Nova Scotia are leaders and are already planning and implementing innovative solutions to combat climate change, protect the environment, and foster a green economy. We propose that the Province team up with these leaders to host consultations to continue to build momentum.

Finally, community-based academic research has proven that participatory methods have a higher chance of increasing trust, perceptions of legitimacy, and creating approaches to complex issues, such as sustainable development, that are more likely to succeed<sup>11</sup>.

With GHG targets based in science and fairness, and the robust inclusion of all communities and stakeholders in the development of the goals, the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund and the Climate Change Clean Growth Strategy, the Sustainable Development Goals Act has the potential to lay the foundation for a future where all Nova Scotians, our ecosystems and biodiversity can thrive. A future where the success of our economy is not at the expense of the well-being of our environment and communities. A future of inclusion, empowerment, innovation and resilience. This is a future worth being bold for. Thank you.

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## Brief on Bill No. 213, The Sustainable Development Goals Act Ecology Action Centre Submission to Law Amendments

### Background:

On October 23, 2019, the Provincial government of Nova Scotia introduced the Sustainable Development Goals Act<sup>1</sup>, which aims to "achieve environmental goals and sustainable prosperity" within Nova Scotia. Understanding the larger context within which this Act exists, is critical in understanding the amendments that the Ecology Action Centre (EAC) is proposing to the Act.

In 2016, the Paris Agreement was signed by 197 countries, all agreeing that they would pursue efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C in order to limit the effects of climate change<sup>2</sup>.

In October of 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C. The report states that globally, governments must take on more ambitious greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets and pathways in order to avoid irreversible effects of climate change, including flooding, sea level rise, drought, extreme weather events, food insecurity, ocean acidification etc. It also noted, that no signatory to the Paris Agreement had established a GHG reduction target that would limit global warming to within 1.5°C<sup>3</sup>.

Since the release of the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, there has been increasing civil unrest on the subject of climate change. Between September 20- 27, 2019, approximately 7.6 million people participated in climate strikes globally. 10,000 people took to the streets of Halifax in protest, and more marched in solidarity in Truro, Middleton, New Glasgow, Antigonish, Sandy Cove, Baddeck and Sydney.

The hundreds of scientists from the IPCC, and the public are calling for more ambition on climate change, and the sense of urgency is unignorable.

### Proposed Amendments to the Sustainable Development Goals Act:

**Whereas Section 7(b) refers to a 2030 GHG target of 53% below the levels that were emitted in 2005, the EAC proposes it be amended to a GHG emissions reduction target of 58% below the levels that were emitted in 2005, by 2030.**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/63rd\\_2nd/1st\\_read/b231.htm](https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/63rd_2nd/1st_read/b231.htm)

<sup>2</sup> [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english\\_paris\\_agreement.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>, Section 2.2, 2.3.5

The EAC proposes to amend the GHG target for the year 2030 based on concerns raised by both the IPCC report and the Paris Agreement.

First, according to the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming, "the rate at which we decrease GHG emissions will determine whether or not we overshoot 1.5°C or 2°C of global temperature rise"<sup>4</sup>. 'Overshoot' refers to a peak followed by a decline in global warming, achieved through anthropogenic removal of CO<sub>2</sub> exceeding remaining CO<sub>2</sub> emissions globally<sup>5</sup>. Despite a decline, following an overshoot, the effects of an overshoot of global warming would still occur and be disastrous.

Section 7(c) of the Act, which sets a target of net zero emissions by the year 2050, is an important step in the right direction, but the speed at which we move towards it will also determine the extent of the impacts of climate change on Nova Scotia. A faster decline in GHG emissions will create a higher chance of staying within 1.5°C of global warming, and not going past it.

Secondly, while all jurisdictions must reduce their GHG emissions, both the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming and the Paris Agreement state that our emission reductions targets must reflect our fair share. The consideration of jurisdictions doing their fair share comes from the concept of "common but differentiated responsibilities", which was enshrined in the internationally agreed upon United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>i</sup>, in 1992. Almost 30 years later, it remains a core piece in international climate agreements, and is included in both the Paris Agreement, and the IPCC Special Report on 1.5° C of Global Warming.

#### **IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming:**

"Collective efforts at all levels, in ways that reflect **different circumstances and capabilities**, in the pursuit of limiting global warming to 1.5°C, taking into account equity as well as effectiveness, can facilitate strengthening the global response to climate change, achieving sustainable development and eradicating poverty (high confidence). {IPCC- 1.4.2, 2.3.1, 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3, 4.2.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.5, 4.5.3, 5.3.1, 5.4.1, 5.5.3, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.6.3}" (pg. 23)<sup>ii</sup>

#### **Paris Agreement:**

##### **Article 2:**

"(a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change"

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>, Section 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.3

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>, Glossary

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"2. This Agreement will be implemented to reflect **equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities**, in the light of different national circumstances."<sup>iii</sup>

As noted above, both the IPCC and the Paris Agreement clearly state that targets set by any jurisdiction must be based in science and must also be equitable, meaning they should represent a jurisdiction's fair share. The Climate Action Tracker<sup>6</sup> is a collaboration between Climate Analytics<sup>7</sup> and the New Climate Institute<sup>8</sup>. It conducts "independent scientific analysis that tracks government climate action and measures it against the globally agreed Paris Agreement aim of "holding warming well below 2°C, and pursuing efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C."<sup>iv</sup>

According to this independent and scientific analysis, a GHG emissions reduction target of 58% below 2005 levels in the year 2030 would represent Canada, and its jurisdictions, fair share<sup>v</sup>. In addition, 58% below 2005 levels by 2030 is the minimum necessary reduction required to be compliant with a 1.5° C global warming target.

**Whereas Section 14 (1) refers to public consultations, the EAC proposes it be amended to read "in-person and participatory consultations".**

Section 14(1) of the Sustainable Development Goals Act, states that "The Governor in Council shall, after public consultation and before this Act comes into force, make regulations establishing goals to achieve sustainable prosperity consistent with the principles and focus areas set out in this Act"<sup>vi</sup>.

On October 23, 2019, the Honourable Minister of Environment Gordon Wilson stated that "...as we move forward, expanding on how we consult is important. The online [consultation] was to get a general feel. Consultation will be more extensive"<sup>vii</sup>.

While there has been language that implies that the consultations that will be held to inform the regulations under the Sustainable Development Goals Act will be more than online consultations, the EAC proposes to include explicit language within the Act, to ensure that consultations are in-person and robust.

Section 4(b) of the Act clearly states that "the achievement of sustainable prosperity is a shared responsibility among all levels of government, the private sector and all Nova Scotians". If the task of sustainable development is a shared-responsibility, then arguably, the development of the parameters and actions that will be developed to achieve sustainable development, must be

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<sup>6</sup> <https://climateactiontracker.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://climateanalytics.org/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://newclimate.org/>

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inclusive of those who share in the responsibility. The IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming also states that climate planning and action must be "...implemented in a participatory and integrated manner" (4.3.3, 4.4.1, 4.4.3).

Taking a participatory approach to consultations would involve greater involvement of those who affect, and are affected by, sustainable development. Participatory consultations would involve:

- Knowledge sharing
- Using existing relationships (i.e. community and network relationships)
- Community strengths and resources
- Co-learning and capacity building

Sharing knowledge in an engaging and inclusive way, will:

- Illuminate situated knowledge and innovation
- Reveal social, economic and political contexts
- Reveal Interplay of evidence and power

All communities are different. The IPCC emphasizes this in its call to action to have governments pursue "place-specific" pathways, as they have the highest potential for also increasing the well-being of a place (5.3.3). Communities have different strengths, economic realities, comparative economic advantages, power dimensions, existing networks and community groups, concerns about climate change, and needs for climate change education, mitigation and adaptation. The IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming emphasizes that there will be robust differences in the effects of climate change between regions and communities. Differentiated effects of sea-level rise, flooding, drought, ocean acidification, decreased aquaculture and ecosystem services, extreme weather events, and species loss, will impact Nova Scotian communities differently depending on their current vulnerabilities.

For this reason, all communities must be engaged fully and in a participatory manner, so that sustainable development can occur within the context of their differentiated situations and realities.

Finally, community-based academic research has proven that participatory methods have a higher chance of increasing trust, perceptions of legitimacy, and creating approaches to complex issues, such as sustainable development, that are more likely to succeed<sup>viii</sup>.

In the midst of calls to action, and deep feelings around fairness with regards to climate change, it is critical that the provincial government undertake the Sustainable Development Goals Act consultations in an inclusive and participatory manner.

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- i <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>,
  - ii [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15\\_SPM\\_version\\_report\\_LR.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf)
  - iii [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english\\_paris\\_agreement.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf)
  - iv <https://climateactiontracker.org/about/>
  - v <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/canada/>
  - vi [https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/63rd\\_2nd/1st\\_read/b231.htm](https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/63rd_2nd/1st_read/b231.htm)
  - vii Bill 213 Announcement and Briefing, 11:45am, Red Room
  - viii [https://www.livingknowledge.org/fileadmin/Dateien-Living-Knowledge/Dokumente\\_Toolbox/LK\\_A\\_Participatory\\_Methods.pdf](https://www.livingknowledge.org/fileadmin/Dateien-Living-Knowledge/Dokumente_Toolbox/LK_A_Participatory_Methods.pdf)



## Press Release Backgrounder

The recently announced Sustainable Development Goals Act includes a legislated climate target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 53% below 2005 levels by 2030. This is currently the most ambitious GHG reduction target in Canada, but is still insufficient. Several European countries have set more ambitious targets, and the science and international agreements are clear in stating that Nova Scotia must do more.

For over two years, the Ecology Action Centre has advocated that Nova Scotia should have a legislated GHG reduction target of 50% below 1990 levels by the year 2030. This target represents the minimum emission reductions required by Canadian jurisdictions in order to do our fair share of keeping global temperature rise to below 1.5°C. This considers Nova Scotia's fair share of reductions, based on the internationally agreed upon understanding that all jurisdictions have "...common but differentiated responsibilities" based on economic ability, current emissions and historic emissions.

### Comparison of Targets

2030 Targets	Reduction from 1990 Base Line	Reduction from 2005 Base Line	Million Tonnes of Provincial CO2e/yr
<b>New Provincial Target</b>	43%	53%	11.2
<b>EAC Target</b>	50%	58%	9.8

According to these targets, in the year 2030, Nova Scotia will emit 11.2 Mt CO2e. If the EAC target was adopted, the emissions in the year 2030 would be 9.8 Mt CO2e.

### Why a Difference of 1.4 Mt CO2e Matters

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming, "the rate at which we decrease GHG emissions will determine whether or not we overshoot 1.5C or 2C of global temperature rise" (p. 15). This means that in the context of getting to net-zero global emissions by 2050 the most rapid decreases in emissions should happen as soon as possible, rather than being delayed.





## Scientific Targets vs Equitable Scientific Targets

The IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming states that “global net anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions [must] decline by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 (40–60% interquartile range), reaching net zero around 2050 (2045–2055 interquartile range)” (pg. 12). For Nova Scotia, 45% below 2010 is equivalent to about 53% below 2005, which is the target found in the Sustainable Development Goals Act.

This target, however, ignores the fact that Canada and Nova Scotia have a greater obligation to reduce emissions than the global average. Figure 1 highlights that not all countries have the same level of emissions.

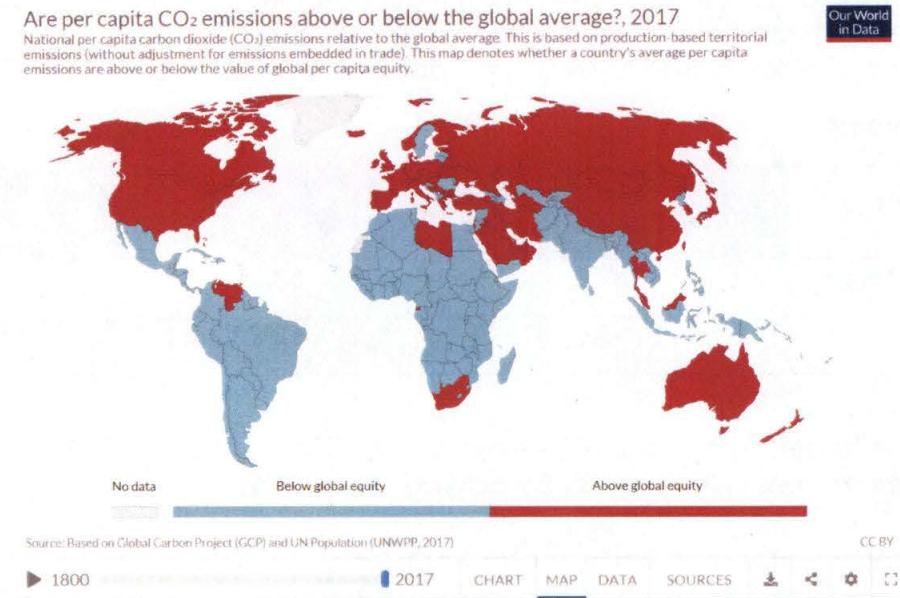


Figure 1. Emissions per Capita by Country<sup>ii</sup>

While all countries must reduce their emissions, both the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming and the Paris Agreement state that our emission reductions targets must reflect our fair share, and reflect that some jurisdictions emit more than others, and some have the monetary ability to reduce emissions faster. The consideration of jurisdictions doing their fair share comes from the concept of “common but differentiated responsibilities”, which was enshrined in the internationally agreed upon United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>iii</sup>, in 1992. Almost 30 years





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later it remains a key piece in international climate agreements, and is included in both the Paris Agreement, and the IPCC Special Report on 1.5° C of Global Warming.

### **IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming:**

"Collective efforts at all levels, in ways that reflect **different circumstances and capabilities**, in the pursuit of limiting global warming to 1.5°C, taking into account equity as well as effectiveness, can facilitate strengthening the global response to climate change, achieving sustainable development and eradicating poverty (high confidence). {IPCC- 1.4.2, 2.3.1, 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3, 4.2.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.5, 4.5.3, 5.3.1, 5.4.1, 5.5.3, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.6.3}" (pg. 23)<sup>iv</sup>

### **Paris Agreement:**

Article 2:

"(a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change"

"2. This Agreement will be implemented to reflect **equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities**, in the light of different national circumstances."<sup>v</sup>

### **Nova Scotia's Fair Share**

According to both the IPCC and the Paris Agreement, targets set by any jurisdiction must be based on science and must also be equitable, meaning they should represent a jurisdiction's fair share. The Climate Action Tracker is a collaboration between Climate Analytics and New Climate Institute. It conducts "independent scientific analysis that tracks government climate action and measures it against the globally agreed Paris Agreement aim of "holding warming well below 2°C, and pursuing efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C."<sup>vi</sup>

According to this independent analysis, global warming could reach over 3°C and up to 4°C if all countries in the world emitted the same amount as Canada<sup>vii</sup>. Furthermore, it states that "Canada's climate commitment is at the least stringent end of what would be a fair share of global effort, and is not consistent with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit, unless other countries make much deeper reductions and comparably greater effort."<sup>viii</sup>

Figure 2 illustrates that Canada's policies are insufficient with keeping global warming at or below 1.5°C or 2°C of warming, and presents confidence ranges for emissions reductions for 2.0C and 1.5C-compliant pathways. This shows an estimated value of 50% below 1990 levels by 2030 to be the minimum reductions necessary to be compliant with a 1.5C target.

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Commitments with this rating are in the least stringent part of their fair share range and not consistent with holding warming below 2°C let alone with the Paris Agreement's stronger 1.5°C limit. If all government targets were in this range, warming would reach over 2°C and up to 3°C.

## Country summary

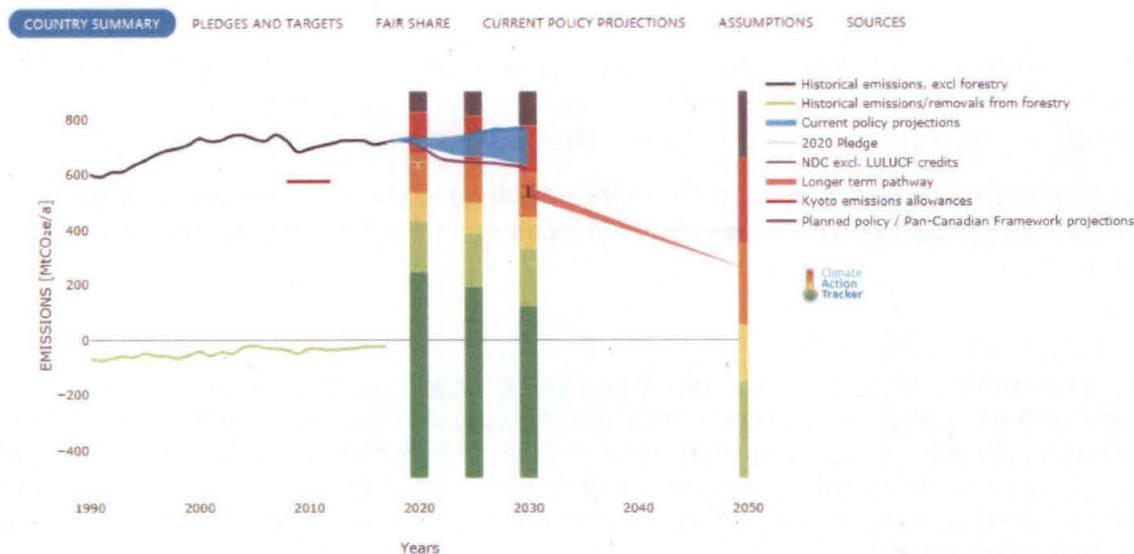


Figure 2. Climate Action Tracker, Canada Profile (Retrieved Oct. 21, 2019)

While the target found in the Sustainable Development Goals Act (53% below 2005 levels by 2030) is the most ambitious in the country, it still does not set us on a pathway of keeping global warming within 1.5°C or 2°C of warming.

## Is it Possible?

Globally, there are countries who have set more ambitious GHG reduction targets than the one advocated for by the EAC. The following countries are on track for achieving their targets and are leading the way in demonstrating that it is, in fact, possible:

United Kingdom: 57% below 1990 by 2030



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Germany: 55% below 1990 by 2030

Norway: Carbon neutral by 2030

## Conclusion

Both the IPCC Special Report of Global Warming of 1.5°C and the Paris Agreement state that GHG targets must be based in science and must represent a jurisdiction's fair share. A legislated target of 53% below 2005 levels by 2030, for Nova Scotia, is a failure on both of these key components because it sets us on track to overshoot 2 degree C of global warming and it is not based on our differentiated responsibility and capability. For this reason, the EAC continues to advocate for a legislated target of 50% below 1990 levels by 2030 (equivalent to 58% below 2005 levels by 2030).

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<sup>i</sup> Overshoot implies a peak followed by a decline in global warming, achieved through anthropogenic removal of CO<sub>2</sub> exceeding remaining CO<sub>2</sub> emissions globally. See also *Overshoot pathways* and *Non-overshoot pathways* (both under *Pathways*). (IPCC Glossary)

<sup>ii</sup> <https://ourworldindata.org/share-co2-emissions>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>,

<sup>iv</sup> [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15\\_SPM\\_version\\_report\\_LR.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf)

<sup>v</sup> [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english\\_paris\\_agreement.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> <https://climateactiontracker.org/about/>

<sup>vii</sup> <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/canada/fair-share/>

<sup>viii</sup> <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/canada/fair-share/>



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## Thirteen Goals to Advance the Environmental and Economic Well-being of Nova Scotia

### **What have Environmental Goals Done for Nova Scotia?**

The Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act became law in Nova Scotia in 2007. It had the backing of all parties in the Legislature and continues to enjoy all party support. The Act was innovative in its integration of environment and economy and the first to enshrine these kinds of goals in legislation. To this day, there is no comparable legislation in Canada, and perhaps North America.

Setting and meeting climate and other goals has resulted in a number of benefits for Nova Scotia:

- **Environmental benefits:** Almost 13% of Nova Scotia's land is now protected, and nearly 40% of our electricity will be from renewable sources by 2020.
- **Economic benefits:** Investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy, local agriculture, and eco-tourism are creating thousands of jobs and entrepreneurial opportunity for Nova Scotians.
- **Policy benefits:** Strong, clear climate and environmental targets have helped to place Nova Scotia in a leadership position in reducing GHG emissions in the past and can help our Province regain this lead when it is most needed and beneficial in the years to come.
- **Province-wide benefits:** Goals on local food, renewable energy efficiency, water quality and more have brought economic and environmental benefits to communities across Nova Scotia.

The green and sustainable economy is one of the fastest growing and vibrant areas of the Nova Scotian and global economies. If well managed, the green economy can be a source of technological and product innovation and entrepreneurial opportunity, that attracts and retains immigrants and youth, and benefits both urban and rural communities in Nova Scotia.

### **What More Could Goals Do?**

Our planet is experiencing a climate and biodiversity crisis. A renewed Act with ambitious and legislated goals would help ensure healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities for all Nova Scotians, by addressing these ecological challenges through a just transition to a more sustainable economy. Nova Scotia is uniquely positioned to be a world leader in working toward a sustainable future.

With the integration of inclusion, equity and justice in the Act, Nova Scotia can ensure that a transition to a cleaner and greener economy benefits all Nova Scotians. We invite Nova Scotians to consider how a renewed Act could advance reconciliation and social cohesion in Nova Scotia, honouring the Peace and Friendship Treaties, the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Government of Nova Scotia recently released an action plan to support the International Decade of People of African Descent and advance equity for African-Nova Scotians. A renewed act can support and align with this initiative.

Not all people are affected equally by environmental issues. Climate change exacerbates the existing disparities and inequities within our communities. We must meet all environmental and climate goals, and transition our economy, in a way that recognizes the structural inequities of race, gender, income, ability, and the ongoing impacts of colonization and environmental racism in our province.

This means that those who already face greater risks, will be impacted the more by environmental and climate change issues, and they will benefit the least from actionable progress. It is critical then that communities deeply affected by environmental issues should be highly involved throughout decision-making processes in meaningful and culturally appropriate ways, and that solutions to these collective problems are designed specifically to benefit these communities.

Our transition must centre the rights of Mi'kmaw people and follow treaty rights and responsibilities under the Peace and Friendship Treaties here in Mi'kma'ki. Our transition must also centre the voices of African Nova Scotians and other peoples at the margins. Finally, our transition must respect traditional and local perspectives, knowledge and experiences, and the findings of inclusive, accessible, transparent, culturally appropriate, and timely consultations. Together, we must work toward a fair, sustainable, and prosperous future to ensure we leave no one behind.

The Government of Nova Scotia recently released an action plan to support the International Decade of People of African Descent and advance equity for African-Nova Scotians. A renewed act can support and align with this initiative.

We have set out 13 possible new goals below, which we believe will result in significant environmental, economic and social benefits for our Province. We think these goals would be strong goals for Nova Scotia to adopt, but we also offer them in the spirit of fostering dialogue. The following goals will ensure that:

- **Reduced GHGs**

## **The Province Reduces Greenhouse Gas Emissions to 50% Below 1990 Levels by 2030.**

Nova Scotia's current climate goals are not science-based, do not reduce emissions enough to avoid catastrophic climate change, and are not legislated. Meeting this new goal would put Nova Scotia in line with its fair share of emissions reductions to keep global warming below the Paris Agreement's target of 1.5°C. This goal is supported by more than 40 other organizations through the 2030 Declaration and would create more than 180,000 jobs-years<sup>1</sup> in Nova Scotia between now and 2030. This is an overarching goal that would be met by reaching EAC's other climate and energy goals.

- **Renewable Energy**

### **90% of Nova Scotia Electricity Needs are Supplied with Renewable Energy by 2030**

In 2017, Nova Scotia still relied on coal for about 55% of its annual electricity needs and now has the dirtiest electricity grid in Canada. Dramatically decarbonizing Nova Scotia's electricity grid is technically and economically possible by displacing coal, oil and large-scale biomass with increased levels of domestic wind, imported hydro, solar, small-scale biomass and community-scale projects. This goal is a key mechanism to reduce our province's overall GHG emissions and will ensure fewer Nova Scotians are made sick or die by air pollution each year. Meeting this goal would create more than 35,000 jobs-years in Nova Scotia between now and 2030.

- **Reducing Energy Poverty**

### **100% of Eligible Social Housing Net-Zero is Energy Ready (NZER) by 2030**

This goal will help Nova Scotians living in social housing save energy, save money and be more comfortable in their homes- thereby contributing to their quality of life and reducing energy poverty within the province. This goal is achieved through reducing energy consumption in all eligible existing social housing by 60% or more, and ensuring all new construction is built to NZER standards. This goal would create more than 9,000 jobs-years in Nova Scotia between now and 2030.

- **Energy Efficiency**

### **The Province Increases the level of total electricity system efficiency (Demand Side Management) to 3% per year by 2030**

Nova Scotia has a strong history of energy efficiency programming, but we consistently limit ourselves in what is possible to save energy, create jobs, address energy poverty and make all Nova Scotians more comfortable in their homes. Increasing the level of total electricity system efficiency to 3% per year by 2030 would nearly triple the work happening in the efficiency sector. This can be achieved by purchasing more demand-side management programming through Efficiency Nova Scotia

- **Zero-Emission Vehicles**

**Nova Scotia will sell 100 per cent zero-emission vehicles by 2040, with sales goals of 10 per cent by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2030 along the way.**

The 27% of GHG emissions in Nova Scotia are from the transportation sector. Electric vehicles are approximately 50% cleaner than single combustion engine vehicles and will increase as the energy grid shifts to renewables. A commitment to selling electric vehicles is needed in order to reduce our carbon emissions from the transportation sector and increase the number of vehicles sold in Nova Scotia.

- **More Green Jobs**

**Nova Scotia will Create 15,000 green jobs every year between now and 2030**

Meeting the first five goals alone will substantially increase the economic prosperity of the green economy in Nova Scotia and aim to create over 15,000 green jobs per year in the province by the year 2030. These jobs are "green" owing to their focus on development of renewable energy resources, saving energy through efficiency and reducing energy consumption. Not all the jobs are incremental (new additions) since some result from the changing nature of work done by Nova Scotians ("green shifting"). The Just Transition for workers in Nova Scotia should be front-and-centre in the planning toward the opportunities in this growing, green economy.

- **Zero Waste**

**Nova Scotia will achieve zero waste by 2030 through the creation of a circular economy.**

Atlantic Canadians want to see action on plastics and other waste. Nova Scotia has the opportunity to reclaim a leadership role in waste reduction and recycling through the expansion of extended producer responsibility programs, product bans and other measures. A strong goal would spur the expansion of the recycling industry and encourage companies looking to address the plastic crisis.

- **Climate Adaptation in Communities**

**The Province will build climate change adaptive capacity and resilience by making resources available to Nova Scotia municipalities to take action on their adaptation priorities by 2022.**

In 2013 municipalities across Nova Scotia developed Municipal Climate Change Action Plans (MCCAPs) focused on how their municipality planned to respond to climate change. These plans are a great resource for Nova Scotia. They need to be updated to reflect current climate science and the concerns of communities disproportionately affected by climate change. A provincial Climate Change Action Fund funded by Nova Scotia's Cap & Trade Green Fund and which also leverages additional Federal Government funds would make it possible for municipalities to implement the plans and achieve their adaptation priorities.

- **Ensure Environmental Equity**

**The Province will establish a Provincial Environmental Equity Working Group to address inequities in climate action and adaptation, and foster resiliency in 2020.**

The Environmental Equity Working Group will have representatives from multiple provincial departments, impacted communities, community groups and academia and will prioritize the active participation of Mi'kmaw and African-Nova Scotian communities in decision-making, recommendations and actions. The Working Group would be mandated to engage those communities who are disproportionately impacted by climate change to co-create solutions that support climate change adaptation and fair inclusion within the changing economy and explicitly focus benefits to those communities. Approaches would honour the resilience and resourcefulness of communities as part of environmental sustainability.

- **End Environmental Racism**

**The Province will update its existing environmental decision-making process to include a race-equity lens by 2021.**

The purpose of the race-equity lens is to ensure that hazardous industries and waste sites are no longer disproportionately sited near or in Mi'kmaw and African-Nova Scotian communities. By 2022, the government will identify and facilitate remediation of sites, so that the long history of environmental racism is no longer a factor in Nova Scotia. This will be accomplished in partnership through shared decision making with Mi'kmaw and African-Nova Scotian communities.

- **Protecting Areas**

**At least 17 percent of the total land mass of Nova Scotia is legally protected by 2025.**

A major new United Nations Report finds that "nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history – with over a million species at immediate risk and the rate of species extinctions accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world." This rapid decline in species is also happening here in Nova Scotia. Canada is a signatory to the Convention of Biological Diversity which commits to 17% land protection nation-wide (Canada Biodiversity Target 1), and Nova Scotia has the ability to protect species and conserve ecosystem services, through more protected areas.

- **Sustainable Forestry**

**The Province will implement the Independent Review of Forestry Practices (The Lahey Report) by 2023.**

The government of Nova Scotia has held two in-depth reviews of forestry practices in the last ten years – both calling for significant reform - and it has made many commitments to



reduce clearcutting and other ecologically harmful practices, but little has actually changed during this time. Committing to fully implement the most recent (Lahey) Report in legislation will ensure forestry is improved in Nova Scotia. Improving forestry practices will help to conserve and restore Nova Scotia's forest biodiversity.

- **Environmental Literacy**

**Environmental and Biodiversity Education is integrated into the provincial public school curriculum by 2023.**

As per Canada's Biodiversity Target 18: "Youth education and awareness of biodiversity is essential if Canada is to grow its next generation of conservation and sustainable development leaders, mainstream biodiversity and meet its biodiversity conservation goals. Mainstreaming the understanding and importance of biodiversity will create a culture of appreciation, conservation, and action." Environmental education relates to all school subjects, and can be taught in a place-based, age-appropriate way at all grade levels, as part of life-long learning about our connection to nature.

- **Additional Measures**

These goals should be embedded into an updated and renewed Act. Goals that have been met should be removed. Goals that have not been met, such as the local food goals, should be retained with a new target date. The Act should also include provisions to measure more effectively the growth of the green economy and a just transition to a low carbon economy. The Roundtable should advise not only the Minister of Environment but the Premier; a renewed Act needs to be part of the Government's core economic policy. The membership of the Roundtable needs to be renewed and the Province should ensure there is Mi'kmaw, African-Nova Scotian and youth representation.

For more information please contact Mark Butler, Policy Director,  
[action@ecologyaction.ca](mailto:action@ecologyaction.ca) or the staff member most knowledgeable about a particular goal.



# Nova Scotia Needs New Climate Goals

Photo: Flickr user bogedad (CC BY 2.0)

If we're going to tackle the climate crisis, we need an ambitious plan — **strong, measurable goals to take action, create jobs and leave no one behind.**

Nova Scotia has set strong goals in the past. They allowed us to achieve our previous climate targets, created thousands of jobs, and build more than 100 community and Indigenous-owned renewable energy projects.

**But there are currently no legislated climate and environmental goals past the year 2020.**

Strong, measurable climate goals are our best chance at addressing the climate crisis, creating tens of thousands of jobs and strengthening the green economy in a way that ensures no one is left behind.

The Ecology Action Centre commissioned an extensive economic cost-benefit report titled, *Nova Scotia Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act Economic Costs and Benefits for Proposed Goals*. It outlines the effects that achieving these goals will have on reducing emissions, and on our communities through direct, indirect and induced impacts to GDP, jobs and taxes.



The goals considered in this report are:

- **Goal 1: Reducing GHG emissions 50% below 1990 levels by 2030**

Meeting this goal would put Nova Scotia in line with its fair share of emissions reductions to keep global warming below the Paris Agreement's target of 1.5°C. This overarching goal is met through goals 2-5.

- **Goal 2: Supplying 90% of NS electricity needs with renewable energy by 2030**

Dramatically decarbonizing Nova Scotia's electricity grid by displacing coal, oil and large biomass with wind, hydro, solar, small scale biomass, and community-scale projects.

- **Goal 3: Making 100% of eligible social housing Net-Zero Energy Ready (NZER) by 2030**

Saving energy and making people more comfortable in their homes by reducing energy consumption in existing social housing by 60% or more, and ensuring all new construction is built to NZER standards.

- **Goal 4: Tripling energy efficiency in the electricity sector by 2030**

Saving money and avoiding the need for new electricity system infrastructure by increasing the level of total electricity system efficiency to 3% a year.

- **Goal 5: Reducing car dependence, and electrifying personal and Public transport**

This goal includes public transit and active transportation promotion, battery electric buses (BEBs), higher occupancy vehicles, and promotion of hybrid and electric vehicles.

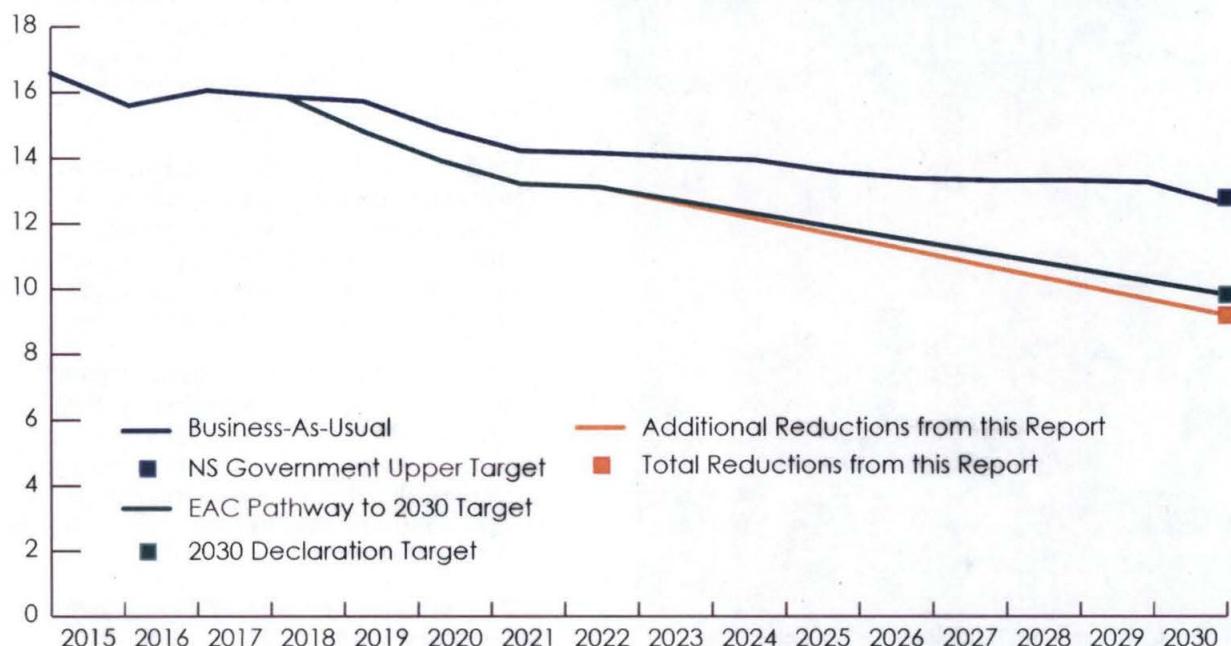
- **Goal 6: Growing Nova Scotia's green economy**

Meeting goals 1 through 5 will substantially increase the economic prosperity of the green economy in Nova Scotia and aim to create over 15,000 green jobs per year in the province by the year 2030.

Achieving these goals would result in the GHG emissions reductions we need!



## Nova Scotia Greenhouse Gas Emissions Pathways



The positive economic impacts of legislating and achieving the outlined goals are immense. Nova Scotia stands to benefit from nearly 180,000 job-years between now and 2030. Not only is this an employment opportunity, but it is also an opportunity for innovation, entrepreneurship, youth retention, immigration and being a world leader in the just transition for workers.

Beyond creating almost 15,000 jobs per year, these goals will reduce GHG emissions, reduce the pollution that makes us sick and upgrade our homes to make us more comfortable.

### Economic Impacts for 2019-2030 (12-year total)

(\$M 2019)	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total NS	Canada
Output	\$10,949	\$3,323	\$2,825	\$17,096	\$22,561
GDP	\$5,839	\$1,936	\$2,022	\$9,797	\$12,392
Income	\$4,284	\$1,381	\$624	\$6,289	\$8,117
Jobs (FTE)	133,483	22,590	23,685	179,759	207,384
Fed tax*	\$523	\$187	\$100	\$810	\$1,064
Prov tax*	\$569	\$235	\$145	\$948	

It's hard to argue with the 12-year benefits of committing to ambitious climate goals and to strengthening the green economy.

Now is the time to seize this opportunity by legislating ambitious, equitable and inclusive climate goals so all Nova Scotian communities can prosper in a sustainable economy, and experience a high quality of life. Together, we can reduce emissions, create thousands of jobs and leave no one behind.

Read the full report and find out more about setting ambitious climate goals in Nova Scotia at: [www.ecologyaction.ca/GreenJobsReport](http://www.ecologyaction.ca/GreenJobsReport)

