

NEG-ECP SCORE CARD: NOVA SCOTIA

Climate Change Action Items	2007 Grade	2010 Grade
POLICY GRADES		
1. Establish a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory	A	A-
2. Establish and Release a Plan for Reducing GHG Emissions and Conserving Energy	C-	A-
3. Promote Public Awareness	B-	B+
4. Government Leads by Example	C+	B+
POLLUTION REDUCTION GRADES		
5. Reduce GHG from the Electricity Sector	C-	A-
6. Reduce Total Energy Demand Through Conservation	C-	B+
7. Reduce / Adapt to Impacts of Climate Change	D+	B-
8. Reduce GHG from the Transportation Sector	C-	D

Background

In August 2001, the six New England Governors and five eastern Canadian Premiers committed the region as a whole to a Climate Change Action Plan with the eventual goal of reducing the region's emissions of greenhouse gases to levels that no longer pose a dangerous threat to the global climate. The long-term goal was set at 75-85% below 2001 levels, while the short-term goal was to have reduced regional GHG emissions to 1990 levels by this year, 2010. The mid-term goal was to have reduced regional GHG emissions by at least 10% below 1990 levels by 2020, with the provision for an interim 5 year process of goal adjustment as necessary. Nova Scotia has incorporated the 10% below 1990 GHG levels by 2020 as its legislated provincial GHG reduction target and is proceeding with policies and frameworks of achieving this target.

Progress Made

Nova Scotia's Environmental Goals & Sustainable Prosperity Act (2007) & Climate Change Action Plan (2009) have laid a framework for Nova Scotia to reduce GHGs and sustainably increase provincial quality of life. As of 2010, much of the Climate Change Action Plan has been initiated. Nova Scotia is the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce hard caps on GHGs from the electricity sector. Complementarily, the province has a legislated goal for 15% renewable electricity by 2015 and an aspirational target of 40% renewable electricity by 2020 and is proceeding aggressively towards these goals. Efficiency Nova Scotia is set to become Canada's first arms-length administrator of energy efficiency & conservation programs & services in 2011. Government initiatives aimed at increasing Nova Scotian's literacy on issues of climate change and what is required to change from the current course, continue to lay the foundation for the province's transition to post-carbon society. Initial steps towards climate resilience and adaptation planning are afoot in the province. Government policy leadership has laid an ambitious, but achievable, course for provincial sustainability. Government must work regionally & nationally, along with Nova Scotian citizens, to ensure that the practical aspects required for the success of sustainability goals & targets are brought to realization. Nova Scotia is to be commended for showing provincial leadership in the absence of meaningful national leadership and obstruction on issues of climate change mitigation.

Improvements Needed

While there has been significant progress in the past 9 years in developing provincial policies and practices aimed at reducing GHGs in Nova Scotia, the reality is that provincial GHGs have not yet begun to fall. Compared to other provinces in Canada, Nova Scotia was the fourth largest per capita emitter of greenhouse gases, due in large part to its heavy reliance on coal for electricity generation (NR Canada, 2006). Further, despite policy interventions, the total GHG emissions of Nova Scotia rose 16.2 per cent between 1990 and 2005 (Environment Canada, 2007). Currently, if the province hopes to meet its modest 2020 target of 10% below 1990 GHG levels, it will require a minimum GHG reduction of 26% for the province as a whole. This will require further regulation of polluting sectors outside of electricity. There is significant opportunity for improvement in the area of transportation which accounts for one quarter of provincial emissions. This could include a comprehensive sustainable transportation strategy for the province with provisions for strict vehicle emissions standards. Ultimately, this will require the provincial department of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal to incorporate GHG emission projections into its frame of reference for decision-making. As a coastal province, Nova Scotia has much at stake in a world of rising sea-levels & increased hurricanes. Significant improvements are needed to reduce the vulnerability and increase the adaptive capacity of the province to the inevitable changes associated with climate change. Despite high level policy goals and targets, Nova Scotia lacks a comprehensive green jobs strategy, including an understanding 'green' industry baselines, gaps and opportunities. In order for there to be policy coherence and consistency in the movement from sustainability rhetoric to action, government leadership is required. Ultimately, come hell or high-water, the province of Nova Scotia must stay the course on its stated sustainability goals and targets and do its part to aggressively reduce greenhouse gases as quickly as possible to contribute its part in the global effort of averting climate chaos.