



Business Plan

2021–22

Environment and Climate Change



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Departmental Business Plans
Finance and Treasury Board
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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2021-22 Business Plan for the Department of Environment and Climate Change. Our mandate is to protect the environment, the health and safety of Nova Scotians, and the welfare of farm animals. Our new name highlights our focus on climate change as a priority for government. This plan sets out key actions we will take over the coming year.

This year, we will be talking to Nova Scotians about the *Sustainable Development Goals Act* and our upcoming Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth. We're looking forward to hearing from Nova Scotians about their ideas and thoughts on this important piece of legislation and plan for our province.

We will also continue investing money from the Green Fund, which is collected as part of our cap-and-trade program. This money will be spent on projects that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create jobs and opportunities in the clean economy, and help low-income families live more comfortably.

Nova Scotia's natural beauty is unparalleled, and in this time of change and uncertainty, many Nova Scotians have grown to appreciate it more than ever before. This year, we will reach our 13 per cent land protection goal, and continue to evaluate new lands for consideration, taking into account their ecological value, recreational use and value to future generations.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, our staff have taken on a new role at our land border, airports and ferries to inform people of the public health Order. I'd like to thank our staff for the important contribution they are making to keep Nova Scotians safe.

We are also a regulator, and that work continues every year. Our staff work hard to protect environmental and human health through their compliance and enforcement efforts, and policy work to reduce risk to our natural environment.

Our staff are skilled, experienced and passionate about their work. I look forward to working with them as we advance these priorities on behalf of all Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Keith Irving

Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Strategic Vision and Approach of the Department of Environment and Climate Change

The vision of the Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) is to be a leader in regulatory excellence, conservation, partnership, and promotion. We protect the environment, human health, and the welfare of farm animals.

The Department of Environment and Climate Change focuses its efforts and fulfills this vision by:

- Developing and updating legislation, regulations, policies, and programs based on sound scientific knowledge and expertise.
- Educating, inspecting, and enforcing compliance with legislation and regulations.
- Delivering programs and services to enhance the protection of the environment, human-health and the welfare of farm animals.
- Proactively responding to environmental, animal, and human health risks.
- Processing notifications, applications, and approvals for regulated activities.

Ministerial Mandate of the Department of Environment and Climate Change

The Ministerial mandate gives direction for the Department of Environment and Climate Change to:

- establish goals, as regulations, under the Sustainable Development Goals Act.
- continue to lead efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- make clean agriculture technology eligible for support under the Green Fund.
- designate additional sites in the Parks and Protected Areas plan.
- develop a framework for identifying and protecting areas of ecological significance.
- support movement toward a more circular economy that benefits everyone.
- make changes to allow restaurants to allow dogs on patios.
- complete the Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth.

Strategic Objectives Contributing to the Department of Environment and Climate Change's Vision and Mandate in 2021-2022

In 2021-2022, Department of Environment and Climate Change will contribute to the following strategic objectives, by undertaking the following initiatives with a citizen-centered approach.

Environmental Sustainability

The Department of Environment and Climate Change will continue creating a foundation of environmental sustainability for the province by developing new sustainable prosperity goals under the Sustainable Development Goals Act (SDGA). After

consultation with the public, these goals will be placed in regulation and the SDGA will be proclaimed.

Diversity

The department will develop goals and measurements and implement action regarding diversity and inclusion within the department. This will enable the Department of Environment and Climate Change to more accurately reflect and better serve the community of Nova Scotia. This will also contribute to the call to action in the Province's *All Together: An action plan for diversity and inclusion in the public service 2019-2024* report.

Regulatory Excellence

The Department of Environment and Climate Change will continue to develop regulations for the Coastal Protection Act, which aims to protect sensitive coastal ecosystems and set clear rules to ensure new construction is built in places safe from sea level rise, coastal flooding and coastal erosion. Once the regulations are in place the Act will be proclaimed.

Protection of the Environment

The Department of Environment and Climate Change will continue to collaborate with the Department of Lands and Forestry in designating sites identified in the Parks and Protected Areas Plan. The department will also continue to identify and protect areas of ecological significance by collaborating with partners including Environment and Climate Change Canada, land trusts and Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq.

Education, Inspection and Enforcement

In order to ensure excellence as a regulator, the Department of Environment and Climate Change will continue to support the professional development of its inspectors. This will be done by providing foundations training for all inspectors related to best practices in enforcement. By doing this, the Department of Environment and Climate Change is able to support its staff and ensure consistent compliance with regulations.

Program Development and Service Delivery

Through its work on the Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth, the Climate Adaptation Leadership Program and Risk Assessment and the Atlantic Data Hub, the Department of Environment and Climate Change will continue to develop programs and deliver services related to climate change.

After departmental and public consultations, the Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth will be completed and launched, in 2021. Legislated by the Sustainable Development Goals Act, the Plan will address:

- achieving greenhouse gas emission targets to reduce GHGs to 53% below 2005 levels by 2030 and reach net zero GHG by 2050;

- adapting to the impacts of climate change and building a climate resilient Province;
- accelerating the integration of sustainable and innovative technologies and approaches;
- and clean inclusive growth.

In addition, the Climate Adaptation Leadership Program (CALP) and Risk Assessment (RA) projects will work to increase Nova Scotia's understanding of the impacts of climate change. They will also help to build capacity within the Province to increase resilience to those changes.

Finally, in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the Governments of Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, Department of Environment and Climate Change will participate in the Atlantic Data Hub, which will provide locally tailored climate data, information, training and other supports to the Atlantic region. The work of the Atlantic Data Hub will help Nova Scotians make informed decisions that include consideration of the impacts of climate change.

[Proactive Response](#)

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, ECC staff were called to action. Staff have been operating check points at the land border, airports and ferries and educating travellers on public health requirements. They have also been responding to public health inquiries related to COVID-19, developing public resource documents, and conducting inspections to ensure COVID-19 compliance at facilities ECC regulates, including food establishments and body art facilities. Finally, they have been providing technical guidance to emergency management, Medical Officers of Health, and cross-departmental committees that are responding to the pandemic. All of this work will continue in 2021-2022 as we face this pandemic.

[Processing Notifications, Applications and Approvals](#)

The Department of Environment and Climate Change uses a technology database to record the Department's work in two areas of essential service to the public: permits, approvals and licenses, and inspection and compliance services. Improvements and enhancements will continue to be done to this technology database, in particular for the Farm Animal Welfare and Primary Products Inspection program, in order to ensure consistent delivery of regulated programs.

Financial Summary

Environment and Climate Change Departmental Expenses Summary (\$ thousands)			
<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>2020-2021 Estimate</u>	<u>2020-2021 Forecast</u>	<u>2021-2022 Estimate</u>
Administration	806	840	1,039
Policy	5,978	5,738	6,145
Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement	21,770	24,955	23,418
Sustainability and Applied Science	11,789	11,168	11,605
Climate Change	2,149	2,126	2,172
Total - Departmental Expenses	42,492	44,827	44,379
Ordinary Recoveries	3,846	3,467	3,676
<u>Funded Staff (# of FTEs)</u>			
Department Funded Staff	356.3	355.1	382.2

Note:
 For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
 For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1