

February 26, 2024

Dear Mayors, Wardens, and Councillors:

Today, February 26, the Government of Nova Scotia announced *The Future of our Coastline: Nova Scotia's plan to protect people, homes, and nature from climate change*.

This plan has 15 actions for property owners, municipalities, and the province to keep coastal homes, communities, and natural areas safer from the impacts of climate change, such as rising sea level and more frequent and intense storms which lead to coastal flooding and erosion. You can read it at [novascotia.ca/coastal-plan](https://novascotia.ca/coastal-plan).

Nova Scotians are a coastal people, and being near the ocean contributes significantly to our quality of life – people want to live by it and enjoy it safely. As the elected representatives of our communities, we all share the same vision – safe, sustainable, healthy, and climate-resilient communities.

Nova Scotians in every part of the province are now experiencing the negative effects of climate change. Last summer's flooding and wildfires were a heartbreaking reminder of that. Our coast is on the front lines of climate change. In response, we are taking action. We are:

- achieving the ambitious targets set out in the *Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act*,
- providing important climate information to Nova Scotians through the first provincial Climate Risk Assessment developed since 2005,
- making significant progress on achieving the 68 goals in the Climate Change Plan,
- designating new protected areas,
- implementing a new strategy to achieve 20 per cent land and water protection by 2030, and
- introducing a new coastal protection plan that responds to specific concerns related to the impacts of climate change on our coast such as erosion, rising sea levels and coastal flooding.

We developed this plan after listening to Nova Scotians, municipalities, and other stakeholders. We also did thorough and thoughtful analysis of all possible options. It does not involve proclaiming the *Coastal Protection Act*, which was too limiting in that it only applied to new builds.

This plan is broader, more flexible, and comprehensive. It is about empowering coastal property owners to make informed decisions, supporting municipal leadership, and taking provincial action to empower our people and our communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change. It is about giving municipalities, communities and private property owners options, because one size fits all doesn't work.

It is the best and most effective path forward to protect the coast and all homes along it – whether they were built 50 years ago or are being planned for the future.

Municipalities are leaders in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and have been for years. Every day, you are leading the change needed to make sure our communities are climate-resilient. Whether that is installing EV chargers, moving to green energy like wind and solar, greening your municipal fleet, or retrofitting buildings and installing heat pumps, you are helping prepare our province for the future.

As Mayors, Wardens, and Councillors, you are leaders in your communities, and you know them best. At the council table, you navigate difficult decisions regarding land-use planning, zoning, by-laws, policies and permits day-in, day-out. This is why we believe that municipalities are best equipped to take critical action designing and building coastal communities that are safe and resilient to climate change, especially as Nova Scotia is experiencing rapid growth. Your leadership is essential in meeting our goals, and working together we cannot fail.

We know you are working tirelessly to manage many issues and priorities and our aim is that you will see the benefits and embrace the actions in this plan. Our government will support you by:

- investing in more flood line maps for you to use in your zoning and planning work,
- investing in your climate adaptation and mitigation work through funding programs like the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund and the Community Climate Capacity Program, and
- conducting a province-wide erosion risk assessment, and more.

In the coming months we will continue to thoughtfully engage with municipal leadership through the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia, and directly with you and your municipality.

By working together, the Province, municipalities and property owners will ensure our coastal communities are designed, planned and built to help protect them from climate change impacts.

With these actions we've set out today, we look forward to continuing to work with you to create thriving, sustainable and resilient communities in Nova Scotia.

Our best regards,



Honourable John A. Lohr  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing



Honourable Timothy Halman  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change

## **Additional Resources:**

Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction

Act: <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/environmental%20goals%20and%20climate%20change%20reduction.pdf>

Our Climate, Our Future: Nova Scotia's Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth:

<https://climatechange.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/ns-climate-change-plan.pdf>

Weathering What's Ahead: Climate Change Risk and Nova Scotia's Well-being:

<https://climatechange.novascotia.ca/climate-impacts>

More information on the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund is available at:

<https://nschallengefund.ca/>

More information on Community Climate Capacity Program is available at

<https://cleanfoundation.ca/ccp/>