

Transitioning to a Low-Carbon Economy

New Brunswick's Climate Change Action Plan

Progress Report 2020

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Transitioning to a Low-Carbon Economy New Brunswick's Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report 2020

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NEW BRUNSWICK'S CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION 2017–2020

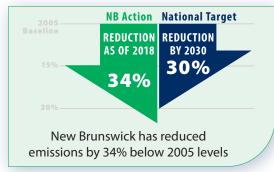
Action Progress and Status



Climate Change Adaptation Plans



New Brunswick GHG Emissions



Implementation Highlights



Introduction of Climate Change Act



Creation of Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship



Made-in New Brunswick carbon tax that protects consumers



Adaptation Plans completed for all cities and highest risk coastal municipalities



Over 40% of in-province electricity sales from renewable sources (wind, solar, hydro)



Over \$2M in energy cost avoidance in schools and hospitals



Over 13,500 homeowners, 1,000 businesses and 100 industrial projects registered in 6 new energy efficiency programs



Over \$7.5M invested in climate change initiatives through the Environmental Trust Fund

What We've Seen



Increase in preparedness to climate change impacts



Increase in electric vehicle charging stations



Increase in energy efficiency programming



Increase in tools to address climate change and public health risks



Increase in climate resilient and natural infrastructure



Increase in climate change education and training resources in schools and workforce



Increase in energy from renewable sources



Decrease in overall GHG emissions

INTRODUCTION



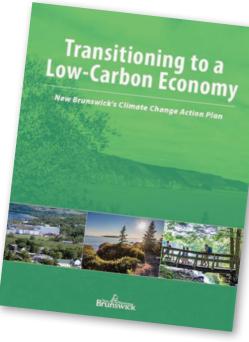
NEW BRUNSWICK'S CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

In April 2016 New Brunswick made a pledge to enhance its existing climate change action plan. An all-party Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on Climate Change was created and tasked with consulting with New Brunswickers on how New Brunswick should respond to the opportunities and challenges associated with climate change and reporting to the Legislative Assembly with recommendations. The Select Committee tabled its report with recommendations in October 2016.

In response to the recommendations made by the Select Committee, New Brunswick released a new comprehensive Action Plan in December 2016. New Brunswick Climate Change Action Plan is a made-in-New Brunswick response to climate change. The Action Plan is one of the most comprehensive in the country and includes 118 actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG)



Climate change action is a shared responsibility. Successful implementation of the province's Action Plan will depend on the collaborative and coordinated action of numerous government departments and with external stakeholder and First Nations. The Climate Change Secretariat, located within the Department of Environment and Local Government, is responsible for coordinating government's response to climate change and working across departments to ensure the successful implementation of the Action Plan. Together, the Climate Change Secretariat, in collaboration with lead departments, will continue to implement the Action Plan and report on its progress and successes annually.



NEW BRUNSWICK'S CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRESS REPORT

New Brunswick's first Climate Change Action Plan was released in 2007 followed by renewed plans in 2014, and most recently in 2016.

The Province of New Brunswick's Climate Change Secretariat has been publicly reporting on climate change progress annually since 2008. This progress report demonstrates a commitment to continue to monitor and track progress of climate change action in New Brunswick. This progress report covers the period from January 2017 to March 2020.

New Brunswick is a leader in taking action on climate change. The Action Plan is already showing results. Individual action highlights are featured throughout this document, however, a complete list of the 118 actions, their lead provincial government department, current status and a description of their progress is outlined in the New Brunswick's Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report 2020: Detailed Summary. Also included in this report is the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report data for New Brunswick which outlines the latest available data for New Brunswick's annual GHG emissions. New Brunswick's annual emissions are broken down by sectors showing the trend of emissions and the percentage each sector contributes to the overall provincial GHG emissions.

This report will follow the same structure as *Transitioning to a Low-Carbon Economy: New Brunswick's Climate Change Action* Plan which includes seven sections: Provincial government leadership; Collaboration with First Nations; GHG emission reductions; Adaptation to the impacts of climate change; Economic opportunities; Accountability and reporting; Funding for climate change.







CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

Although action on climate change is a shared responsibility involving all New Brunswickers, the provincial government holds a specific responsibility to lead by example. The provincial government has been at the forefront of ensuring the planning and implementation of the actions outlined in the Action Plan.

This section of the Action Plan outlines the role of the provincial government in leading change and supporting the actions needed to successfully address the challenges and opportunities presented by a changing climate. This section of the Action Plan covers actions 1–29 and the following categories: *Role of the provincial government in leading change, Education and awareness, Capacity-building, Carbon-neutral government, Provincial buildings GHG emissions, Provincial transportation GHG emissions, Low-carbon procurement and Inter-jurisdictional partnerships and collaboration.*

Provincial government leadership highlights include:

Role of the provincial government in leading change

- The Climate Change Act was introduced in December 2017 and proclaimed in the spring of 2018. Amendments to enable the regulation of emissions from large industrial emitters were made in March 2020. (Action 2)

Education and awareness

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Anglophone and Francophone sectors have been actively collaborating on the incorporation of climate change into education and providing New Brunswick educators with the tools to do so. This includes the creation of Climate Change resource documents, an online climate information platform and professional development for educators. In addition, the Province has championed the development of a youth consultation committee inviting New Brunswick youth to encourage leadership and climate action and to support educators in climate education and literacy. (Action 9)



Capacity-building

- Both NBCC and CCNB have invested in training in energy efficiency, energy management and non-emitting energy. NBCC for example offers an Energy Systems Technologists program with a focus on renewable resources. CCNB also offers courses that focus on environmentally friendly techniques through several of its programs. (Action 11)

Carbon-neutral government

A preliminary study was completed in March 2020 that explores the topic of carbon neutral government and identifies
the overarching framework and approach for achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. (Action 13)

Provincial buildings GHG emissions

- Government continues to demonstrate leadership in addressing climate change by currently designing and constructing new schools to the LEED v4.1 rating system by the Canada Green Building Council. The King Street Elementary School in Miramichi is the first LEED BD+C: Schools v4 project certified in Canada and the first LEED v4 certification for New Brunswick. (Action 16)
- Since April 2017, the provincial government investments from its energy efficiency programs (energy retrofit program, renewable energy, and Education and Early Childhood development's Lighting Program) have contributed to a GHG reduction of 31,410 tonnes. (Action 17)
- Through the lifecycle evaluation process, new publicly funded buildings are being constructed using natural gas or wood pellet heating systems rather than fuel oil. Where possible for existing buildings, the provincial government has initiated low-carbon fuel conversions or installed stand-alone heating plants at the time of equipment renewal to offset reliance on fuel oil. Over the past 24 months, 14 buildings have been refitted or upgraded, contributing to a reduction of 3,600 tonnes of GHG emissions per year. (Action 19)

Provincial transportation GHG emissions

In 2017–18, the provincial government acquired two electric school buses. In 2018–19, 11 plug-in hybrid electric vehicles were added to the general fleet. In 2019–2020, government procured 16 propane school buses and 74 gasoline buses, rather than diesel school buses, because they are more environmentally friendly than diesel. (Action 22)

Low-carbon procurement

The provincial government conducted a preliminary study which was completed in March 2020 that explores the topic
of green procurement and identifies various approaches for implementation of a green procurement policy for government. (Action 23)

Inter-jurisdictional partnerships and collaboration

- In November 2019, New Brunswick hosted the fall session of Natural Resource Canada's (NRCAN) Adaptation Plenary, a
 national forum that brings together key groups in Canada to collaborate on climate change adaptation priorities. The fall
 session allowed New Brunswick to profile and highlight local adaptation initiatives. (Action 28)
- New Brunswick and Canada have partnered beginning in 2019 to support three projects under NRCAN's Building Regional Adaptation Capacity and Expertise program. These include: 1) Developing climate change educational material for engineers; 2) Establishing a natural Infrastructure Community of Practice for Planners, Engineers, Municipalities and NGOs, and 3) Providing training for forestry professionals to assist woodlot owners in developing climate-adjusted forest management plans. (Action 29)



COLLABORATION WITH FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES

Collaboration with First Nation communities is a priority and the provincial government will continue to work with First Nation communities to help address the challenge associated with climate change. The actions included in the action plan are a starting point, setting out New Brunswick's commitment to an ongoing dialogue and long-term engagement. The Department Environment and Local Government has been engaged in discussions with First Nations organizations to discuss climate change in general as well as in relation to specific actions within the action plan that are of interest to communities. These discussions are part of an ongoing effort to build relationships and collaborate.

Collaboration with First Nation communities highlight:

- The provincial government continues an on-going dialogue with First Nations representatives to develop a path forward in addressing priority action items as they relate to climate change. (Action 30)



GHG EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

The provincial government has continued to be a national leader in GHG emission reductions. In 2016 the Government of Canada committed to lowering emissions by at least 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 in response to the 2015 Paris Accord. Our province has already made significant progress in lowering emissions, having reduced our emissions by 34% since 2005 (Figure 1), and is on track to help Canada meet its 2030 emission reduction goal.

Figure 1. GHG Reductions Since 2005

The provincial government has established its own provincial GHG targets which are included as action 31 in the Action Plan and were made part of the *Climate Change Act* in 2018. These include targets for 2020, 2030 and 2050 that reflect a total output of: 14.8 Mt by 2020; 10.7 Mt by 2030; and 5 Mt by 2050 (Figure 2). The most recent information from Environment and Climate Change Canada has New Brunswick's emissions at 13.2 Mt based on 2018 data. As such we have surpassed our 2020 target and are on our way towards our 2030 target.

Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of GHG emissions among the various sectors in New Brunswick, with

Paris Copenhagen CANADA (2030)(2020)Newfoundland & Labrador Prince Edward Island **New Brunswick** Nova Scotia Quebec **Ontario** Manitoba Saskatchewan Alberta **British Columbia** 10% -40% -30% -20% -10% 0% 20% 30%

electricity generation, industry and transportation identified as the largest contributors to New Brunswick's GHG emissions. To date, GHG reductions in New Brunswick have been achieved through significant actions related to closures of coal and oil-fired plants; the incorporation of wind energy; restructuring in the forestry sector; and investments in energy efficiency.

Figure 2. NB GHG Emissions and GHG Targets

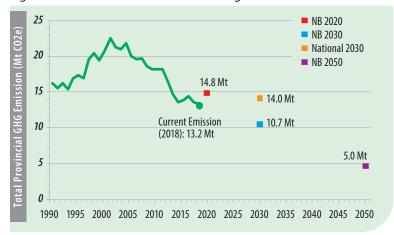
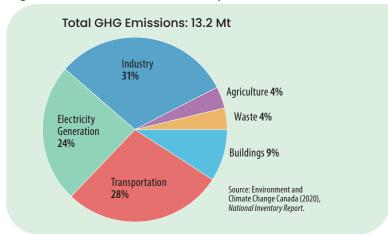


Figure 3. Current NB GHG Emissions by Sector (2018 data)



Concrete actions are being led by the provincial government, industry, businesses, First Nations communities, non-profit-organizations and families to reduce GHG emissions while also maintaining economic competitiveness. While progress is ongoing, a number of opportunities remain to reduce GHG emissions in New Brunswick, many of which are highlighted in the Action Plan.

Current emissions projections show that while the province is on a path to meet its 2030 target, this will only be achieved if the Action Plan continues to be implemented.

This section of the Action Plan covers actions 31–65 and the following categories: GHG emission reduction targets, Cross-sector action – A price on carbon, Clean energy and efficiency programs, Renewable and low-emission energy, Reduced GHG emissions from transportation, Regulation of industry emissions, Reduced GHG emissions from waste, Reduced emissions from agriculture, Carbon sinks and offsets and Planning for smart, low-carbon development.

GHG emissions reductions highlights include:

Cross-sector action - A price on Carbon

- Effective April 1, 2020, New Brunswick introduced a provincial carbon tax on 22 different fuels. Provincial taxes on gasoline and diesel were reduced to help protect consumers resulting in an effective incremental price of 2c/l on gasoline and diesel. The provincial government is currently in the process of developing a New Brunswick Output-Based Pricing System as a means of regulating GHG emissions from large industrial emitters in the province, including electricity generation. Amendments to the Climate Change Act were made in March 2020 to enable the New Brunswick Output-Based Pricing System once federal approval is issued. (Action 32)

Clean energy and efficiency programs

- Since April 2017 through NB Power's Energy Efficiency Programming, 167 Gigawatt hours of energy have been saved with a reduction of approximately 100,000 tonnes of GHG emissions per year. (Action 33)
- Since April 2017, six new energy efficiency programs were launched in residential, commercial and industrial sectors. Since then, 13,500 homeowners have registered for the residential programs, over 1000 business have registered for commercial programs and industrial companies have enrolled 123 projects (Action 33)



Source: NB Power

- The *Building Code Administration Act* was introduced on March 17, 2020 but is subject to proclamation. The development of supporting regulations and adoption of both the National Energy Code for Buildings and the National Building Code are planned for the 2021 construction season. (Action 38)

Renewable and low-emission energy

- New Brunswick is currently pursuing an equivalency agreement with the federal government for the Belledune Generating
 Station. The agreement will require the equivalent or better GHG emissions reductions as per phasing out coal by 2030, while
 allowing the Belledune Generating Station to continue to operate under a modified operating regime. This will result in a
 significant cost avoidance to electricity ratepayers while at the same time ensuring GHG emissions reductions. (Action 40)
- NB Power has met and is currently exceeding the requirement to serve 40 per cent of in-province electricity sales from renewable sources. (Action 42)

Reduced GHG emissions from transportation



Source: NB Power

- The provincial government has achieved significant progress in expanding its electric vehicle charging infrastructure to cover the entire province making New Brunswick the first fully-connected province in Canada for electric vehicles. Much of this progress has been achieved through expansion of the eCharge Network, NB Power's smart charging program for electric vehicles. There are currently 174 Level 2 chargers, 38 Level 3 DC Fast Chargers and 48 Tesla Super Chargers in the province. (Action 47)
- The province has been working on a Public Transportation Innovation initiative in cooperation with the Kent Regional Service Commission (RSC) exploring ways to potentially develop public transportation options for the Kent region. (Action 51)

Regulation of industry emissions

- In 2017, New Brunswick made amendments to operating approvals for industrial facilities that emit at least 10,000 tonnes of GHG emissions per year requiring that they report their GHG emissions to the Department of Environment and Local Government using the Federal Single Window Reporting web platform. As a result, an additional 7 industrial facilities GHG emissions are being collected and utilized in the province's GHG emissions inventory and projections, bringing the total number of reporting industrial facilities to 17 as of March 2020. (Action 52)

Reduced GHG emissions from waste

All six New Brunswick landfills continue to operate landfill gas management systems that capture methane emissions, thus lowering the amount of GHGs escaping into the atmosphere. Five landfills are currently producing electricity from methane gas capture. (Action 56)



Source: Fredericton Regional Solid Waste Commission

Reduced emissions from agriculture

The provincial government completed negotiations with the federal government on shared funding

under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) (2018–2023). The agreement includes financial incentives to assist producers to evaluate the environmental and climate change risks associated with their operations, acquire knowledge and tools to address these risks, and assist in enhancing the agricultural land base. From January 2018 to present, 82 projects have been funded, with a focus on land drainage, precision farming, nutrient management planning, energy audits and upgrades and renewable energy systems. (Action 57)

Carbon sinks and offsets

- The provincial government released an updated version of the Watercourse and Wetland Alteration (WAWA) Reference
 Map in January 2020 and held information sessions with stakeholders and the public throughout the province. Wetlands are an important natural carbon sink. (Action 59)
- A carbon offset potential study is currently being completed for New Brunswick. The study intends to assess the opportunities and costs associated with developing compliance quality carbon offsets in New Brunswick. (Action 60)

Planning for smart, low-carbon development

New Brunswick's Community Planning Act and Local Governance Act were modernized and proclaimed on January 1, 2018.
 Each new Act includes the ability to respond to the needs of local governments and their priorities for climate adaptation and mitigation. (Action 65)



ADAPTATION TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



The Province is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. New Brunswick's mean annual temperature has already increased by 1.1°C in the last 30 years, and climate models predict that the province will warm another 5°C by 2080. Projections indicate that the province can expect an elevated risk of heat-related health concerns; new pests and invasive species; flood damage; impacts from extreme winds; and icing of trees and power lines. Rising sea levels have also increased the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. Historically, the province has experienced extreme weather events that have caused catastrophic damages. However, since the release of the Action Plan in December 2016, a number of these weather

events have occurred including a snow and freezing rain storm moved across the province causing a long duration of power outages and destroying much of the electrical distribution infrastructure in the Acadian Peninsula. In 2018 and 2019, the province experienced back-to-back spring flooding along the St. John River causing record setting flooding and the highest damage costs of any flood event. Additionally, in late summer of 2019, post-tropical storm Dorian brought high winds and rain to the region that resulted in extensive property, infrastructure, and shoreline damage.

Climate change adaptation is about making well informed forward-looking decisions that take into consideration future climate conditions. A changing climate presents both risks and opportunities for New Brunswick's communities and resource sectors. To reduce these risks and take advantage of opportunities, we must understand the problems and challenges posed by a changing climate and present realistic approaches to dealing with them. Adaptation will help to maintain and enhance our province's economic competitiveness and the well-being and resilience of our citizens, communities and natural resources.

This section of the Action Plan covers actions 66–104 and the following categories: *Understand climate change impacts; Build climate-resilient infrastructure; Support community adaptation planning; Adapt natural resources and agriculture; Reduce climate-related hazards and Reduce climate change impacts on public health.*

Adaptation highlights include:

Understand climate change impacts

- The provincial government has acquired the most up-to-date climate change projections for the province, including temperature, precipitation and sea level rise projections. These data are essential to informing climate change adaptation planning efforts and completing vulnerability assessments across various sectors. (Actions 67 & 68)
- Publicly available LiDAR data (i.e. digital elevation data) has been acquired for the full province. This data supports adaptation planning efforts across all sectors, by informing decisions on items such as land-use planning and identifying areas most at risk to the impacts of climate change. (Action 69)

Build climate-resilient infrastructure

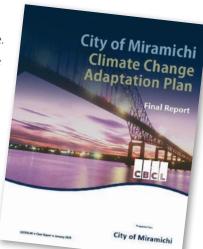
The provincial government has worked with Nova Scotia to increase the awareness of the climate risks posed to the Chignecto Isthmus. The Isthmus is the sole land bridge connecting the two provinces and carries an estimated \$50 million per day, or \$20 billion annually, of trade. The province is exploring options for how best to protect the transportation corridor from the impacts of climate change, specifically sea-level rise and storm surge. (Action 72)

Support community adaptation planning

- Work is ongoing to support regional adaptation planning efforts throughout the province.
 This work has been supported by the Environmental Trust Fund. To date, Regional Service
 Commissions (RSC) that have completed regional climate change adaptation plans include the Northwest RSC, Chaleur RSC, and the Southwest NB RSC. Work is ongoing in other regions. (Action 77 & 78)
- All New Brunswick cities and highest risk coastal municipalities have completed vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans. (Action 81 & 82)

Adapt natural resources and agriculture

- The provincial government has begun two collaborative research projects with:1) the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) on identifying and integrating the impact of projected climate scenarios on stand level tree regeneration into forest management planning tools used by the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development. 2) The University of New Brunswick, CFS and Northern Hardwood Research Institute to evaluate the costs and benefits of adapting to climate-induced changes in drought and wind regimes in New Brunswick forests. These projects also support actions 84 and 90. (Action 83)
- Since 2018, under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) Eighty-five projects related to climate change adaptation have received 46 per cent of the five-year CAP beneficial management practices program budget. Projects included water supply, irrigation management, soil drainage, soil conservation and riparian protection. (Action 86 & 87)

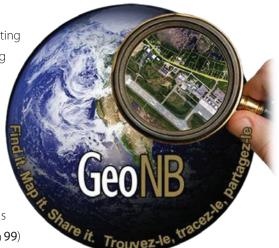


Reduce climate-related hazards

 The provincial government has commenced efforts to enhance and update existing flood hazard maps. This includes the creation of coastal flood hazard mapping for the entire New Brunswick coastline as well as inland flood mapping of numerous watercourses. (Action 96)

Reduce climate change impacts on public health

The provincial government developed a public health communication strategy
to educate government staff, the public, and other stakeholders about climate
change impacts to human health. The strategy was finalized in 2019 and has
been presented to public health professionals throughout the province. (Action 99)





ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Transitioning to a low-carbon economy presents opportunities for New Brunswickers and as a province we need to be positioned to take advantage of these opportunities. Clean energy systems, energy efficiency and clean technologies will become increasingly important in driving regional economic growth. Investments in low-carbon technology innovation and clean energy development provide a clear path to reduce GHG emissions while encouraging sustainable economic growth. For example, a recent study projects strong investment in energy efficiency programs could create more than 25,000 full-time jobs and raise the provincial GDP by \$4.9 billion over the next decade¹. These investments are not only expected to increase GDP growth but could also contribute to a reduction in GHG emissions².

New Brunswick is taking action to implement measures to reduce emissions, which will in turn lead researchers, businesses and consumers to seek out and adopt clean technology solutions. Initiatives led by provincial government departments could also encourage clean technology companies to gain access to the marketplace. This section covers actions 104–109.

¹ Economic Impacts of Improved Energy Efficiency in Canada, Dunsky Energy Consulting, 2018

² National Energy Board, 2018

Economic opportunities highlights include:

- In support of a clean-technology acceleration strategy, an initial scoping exercise was undertaken in 2018. The provincial government, BioNB and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency took a comprehensive look at identifying the strengths and opportunities of the clean tech industry in New Brunswick. The focus was on identifying projects that could leverage existing federal funding. The priority opportunities identified were in bio-based energy, cleaner energy alternatives, water technologies and waste to bio products and also revealed existing sector strengths in the waste, construction, agriculture and forestry sectors. (Action 105)
- The province continues to create the conditions for growth and job creation in the areas of clean technology, products and services related to climate change in all sectors (Action 106).
- For example:
 - The province's Forest Biomass Policy sets a framework whereby companies are permitted to harvest forest biomass in a sustainable manner. There are more than 20 New Brunswick facilities which consume residual forest products (either forest biomass or sawmill residues) for the purpose of energy production and/or producing fuels.
 - In 2018, the province invested \$10 million in research and development for advanced small modular reactors. In partnership with vendors



- (ARC and Moltex), NB Power and UNB, progress has been made to advance the designs through the design phase and Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's regulatory process.
- The province's Agricultural Research and Innovation Program, under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership has funded
 15 projects with climate change/clean technology implications between April 2018 until March 2020.



ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

The Climate Change Secretariat, in conjunction with other provincial government departments responsible for leading and implementing the numerous actions listed in the Action Plan, are dedicated to ensuring transparency through consistent and comprehensive reporting. This section covers actions 110–116.

Accountability and reporting highlights include:

- The Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly was established in December 2019. (Action 111)
- The provincial government implemented an Energy Management Strategy and reporting system to ensure all departments are accountable for energy consumption and corresponding GHG emissions. As of March 2020, 293 schools and 10 healthcare facilities were entered into the system. Lower energy consumption will reduce GHG emissions and provide cost avoidances for the people of New Brunswick. Linked to action 17. (Action 113)
- A total of 52 climate change vulnerability assessments for communities have been completed to date across New Brunswick and climate change adaptation plans have been developed for 41 communities. (Action 115)

FUNDING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Ongoing funding for climate-related work was a key recommendation of the Select Committee on Climate Change. Funding will be required to invest in the adaptation and mitigation initiatives which are presented in the Action Plan. This section covers actions 117–118.

Funding for climate change highlights include:

- The Climate Change Fund was established under the Climate Change Act in 2018. (Action 117)

MOVING FORWARD



New Brunswick is a leader in taking action on climate change. New Brunswick's Climate Change Action Plan is already showing results and as a province, New Brunswick is committed to do as much as it can to combat climate change.

Addressing climate change is a shared responsibility requiring leadership and action from inside and outside government. The Climate Change Action Plan outlines a strong path forward towards addressing climate change. Successful implementation of the province's Action Plan will depend on the collaborative and coordinated action of numerous provincial government departments and with external stakeholders and First Nations.

Through our commitment to implementing the Climate Change Action Plan, the provincial government will ensure that the necessary actions are taken to build resilience in our communities and infrastructure as well as support both economic growth and GHG emissions reductions. We will continue to work with First Nations to share information and develop a path forward in addressing priority action items as they relate to climate change.

The Government of New Brunswick is committed to measuring and tracking the delivery of actions and will continue to report on their progress.

