

Nova Scotia's Sustainable Development Goals and Pieridae Energy

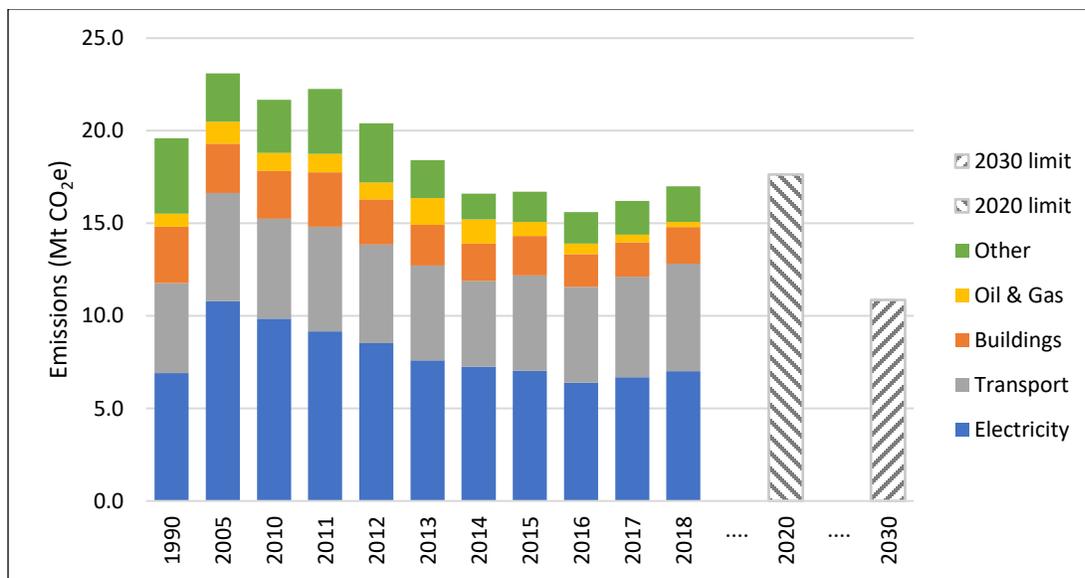
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A year ago, the Nova Scotia government passed the “Sustainable Development Goals Act”. It sets targets for future greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the province, notably that:

- (a) by 2020, at least 10% below the levels that were emitted in 1990;
- (b) by 2030, at least 53% below the levels that were emitted in 2005; and
- (c) by 2050, at net zero, by balancing greenhouse gas emissions with greenhouse gas removals and other offsetting measures.

The accompanying chart shows the greenhouse gas emissions levels for Nova Scotia's major emitters from Environment and Climate Change Canada's 2020 National Inventory Report, an annual summary of provincial and territorial greenhouse gas emissions for selected years between 1990 and two years prior to the report's release date. The 2020 and 2030 bars represent the 10% and 53% emissions limit specified in the Sustainable Development Goals Act.



In 2014, Nova Scotia's emissions fell below the 2020 limit, the result of Nova Scotia Power reducing its use of carbon-intensive fuels, the closure and partial closure of two electricity-intensive paper mills, the shuttering of the Dartmouth refinery, a significant decline in transportation emissions, and a weak economy. However, since 2016, the province's emissions have been on the rise, with gains by the three largest emissions sources: electricity, transportation, and buildings.

If this trend continues, Nova Scotia could exceed its 2020 limit.

To meet its 2030 emissions limit, the province will need to reduce its emissions by six megatonnes from its 2018 level of 17 megatonnes. The bulk of these reductions are expected to be the result of Nova Scotia Power exceeding its legislated 2030 emissions target.

According to its recently released Integrated Resource Plan, Nova Scotia Power's emissions could decline between 40% to over 90% by 2030. This will require transport, buildings, oil & gas, and other non-energy sources of greenhouse gases to reduce their combined emissions by up to a third from 2018 levels.

Enter Pieridae Energy.

Pieridae Energy plans to build a liquefied natural gas (LNG) export terminal in Guysboro county for shipping LNG to Germany. As Roger Taylor's article on the project made clear (Pieridae ramps up Goldboro LNG activity, 2 October 2020), the project is to create 5,000 jobs during the four-and-a-half-year construction phase of the project which starts next summer.

However, the one thing Mr. Taylor did not mention in his article are the projected 3.7 megatonnes of greenhouse gases the project will emit annually when it begins operation in 2026. If Pieridae does not reduce the terminal's emissions, Nova Scotia's emissions will exceed its 2030 cap by about one-third.

Nova Scotia has an in-province cap-and-trade system for large emitters. This will require Pieridae Energy to purchase emissions credits from other emitters in Nova Scotia who are below their emissions caps. Without sufficient emissions credits to offset Pieridae's emissions (from, for example, Nova Scotia Power), Nova Scotia will not achieve its emissions target for 2030.

The Sustainable Development Goals Act also states that for the Province to achieve sustainable prosperity, it must include Netukulimk, which, according to the Act, *"means, as defined by the Mi'kmaq, the use of the natural bounty provided by the Creator for the self-support and well-being of the individual and the community by achieving adequate standards of community nutrition and economic well-being without jeopardizing the integrity, diversity or productivity of the environment"*.

The impact of COVID-19 on Nova Scotia's already weak economy means the need for new employment is essential to the province.

The challenge facing the government is how to permit the construction of an emissions-intensive LNG export terminal but still ensure that the Province can achieve sustainable prosperity as defined by Netukulimk.

Equally, the challenge facing anyone objecting to the project will be how to create 5,000 low-emissions jobs to ensure that the Province can achieve sustainable prosperity as defined by Netukulimk.