



NS Universities and Colleges Power Purchasing Partnership

Climate Change Action & Emission Targets - February 20244

Higher Education's Need for Off-Site Renewable Electricity

Introduction

Nova Scotia's higher education sector is acting on energy and climate change mitigation and adaptation issues. The nine universities and community college in this partnership have publicly committed to emission reduction targets that are in line with and in some cases exceed provincial and federal 2030 greenhouse gas emission targets.

For over a decade, our sector has worked individually and together through our universities and colleges sustainability network. All institutions have implemented some energy efficiency projects. A variety of initiatives range from LED lighting upgrades to full building energy retrofits, air and ground sourced heat pumps and on-site solar PV implementation, and full-scale district energy upgrades. Five-, 10-, 20- and 30-year plans identify projects that need to be completed to achieve next zero emissions. Procuring off-site renewable electricity is a key strategy to meet our 2030 goals.

Alignment with the Green Choice Program

Participating in the Green Choice Program is a critical strategy for meeting public commitments given the energy density of academic buildings and the lack of available land and building space for on-site renewables. Off-site renewable power will be needed. The Green Choice Program provides an opportunity for our sector to support new renewable electricity production, wind and/or solar, in Nova Scotia. Other important community and social elements of the program are also key goals listed in all university and college strategic plans.

There are several sector drivers for meeting 2030 targets including environmental, reputational, recruitment, international and national academic rankings and life cycle costing.



Procuring new off-site renewable electricity is identified in higher education climate change plans and strategies. Public commitments have been made for 2030 (Table 1). The Green Choice Program aligns with these ambitions, The higher education sector is a committed and interested party in advancing Nova Scotia climate change action.

Table 1: Links to Publically Stated Climate Change and Emissions Targets

Institution	GHG Targets	Public Website with Published Targets
Acadia University	Achieve carbon neutrality, ideally by 2030.	https://sustainability.acadiau.ca/energy-and-climate.html
Cape Breton University		https://www.cbu.ca/about-cbu/sustainability/
Dalhousie University	Dalhousie's updated targets for scope 1 and 2 emissions include 30% reduction by 2025, 55+% reduction by 2030, 80% reduction by 2040, and carbon neutrality before 2050. In addition, Scope 3 emissions (indirect emissions that occur in the value chain) will be reported on and action will be taken to influence reductions.	https://www.dal.ca/dept/sustainability/campus-initiatives/Energy_and_Climate_Change.html
Mount Saint Vincent University		https://www.msvu.ca/about-msvu/sustainability-at-the-mount/
Nova Scotia College of Art and Design	Targets include by “2030, to be at least 53% below the levels that were emitted in 2005; and by 2050, to be net zero, by balancing greenhouse gas emissions with greenhouse gas removals and other offsetting measures.” Efforts will be made to understand the impact of Scope 3 emissions and make reductions.	https://nscad.ca/about-us/facility-operations/
Nova Scotia Community College	NSCC has set the following emissions targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% reduction from baseline by 2030 • 80% reduction from baseline by 2040 • Net-zero emission from baseline by 2050 	https://www.nsccl.ca/about/vision-and-values/sustainability/climate-change.asp
Saint Mary's University	Meet or exceed the provincial goal of a 53 percent reduction by 2030.	https://news.smu.ca/news/2022/6/22/saint-marys-university-exceeds-goal-and-timeline-for-greenhouse-gas-reduction
University of Kings College	Targets include reaching “...at least 53% below the levels that were emitted in 2005;” by 2030, “...and by 2050, to be net zero, by balancing greenhouse gas emissions with greenhouse gas removals and other offsetting measures.” Further to this, King's will work to address the impact of Scope 3 emissions.	https://policies.ukings.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Sustainability-Commitment.pdf
Université Sainte-Anne		https://www.usaintanne.ca/en/about-us/our-green-commitment