



## Annual Report Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025

## Message From the Council

As the Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for overseeing the work of the Net Zero Advisory Council, I am pleased to present the Net Zero Advisory Council's Annual Report for the period of April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025. The Net Zero Advisory Council's mandate is to provide advice to the Provincial Government, through the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, on policies and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve net zero by 2050. As a Category 3 entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act** the council's completed activities fulfill the reporting requirements outlined for entities of this category.

In compliance with the **Act**, the Net Zero Advisory Council developed a three-year activity plan covering the 2023–2026 period. The Advisory Council is responsible for setting realistic objectives and reporting annually on its progress. This report outlines the Net Zero Advisory Council's work during the 2024–2025 fiscal year. In 2024-25, the council focused on the transportation, oil and gas, building and space heating, and waste management sectors. Over the three-year course of its work, the council submitted 54 recommendations to the Minister.

The membership term for members expired in December 2024 and new membership appointments are under consideration.



Dr. Susan Squires  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Department of Environment and Climate Change

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## Overview

The Net Zero Advisory Council (the council) was established in December 2021 to advise Government through the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on how the province can reach its goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

### Board Composition

In 2024-25, the council was composed of eight members from environmental organizations, education institutions, industry associations, private sector companies, and Indigenous organizations. Net Zero Advisory Council members in 2024-25 are listed below. Membership terms for these members expired in December 2024. New membership appointments are under consideration.

Member	Region
Mr. Kieran Hanley, Chair	East Coast NL
Dr. Kelly Vodden, Vice Chair	West Coast NL
Ms. Caron Hawco	East Coast NL
Ms. Kaylen Janes	East Coast NL
Dr. Nick Mercer	West Coast NL, now out of province (PEI)
Dr. Jonas Roberts	East Coast NL
Mr. George Russell	Labrador
Dr. Angela Carter	East Coast NL

Net Zero Advisory Council members are appointed by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Members appointed to date served a term of three years, ending December 2024. They serve as volunteers and there is no remuneration. The council, with support from the Department of Environment and Climate Change, advised the Provincial Government on policies and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the province, with a particular focus on achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

The council ensured diverse viewpoints were fairly heard and considered when providing advice and recommendations on greenhouse gas reduction pathways. The government makes the final decisions on any courses of action that may be taken to reduce emissions.

The Net Zero Advisory Council is a Category 3 government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**.

### Vision

The Net Zero Advisory Council's vision is that Newfoundland and Labrador will be on a strong path to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 while supporting the green economy, a just transition, and affordability.

## **Mandate**

The mandate of the Net Zero Advisory Council is to:

- a) Identify and/or review near term and foundational actions the government and others can take to set the province on a strong path to achieve net zero that would grow the green economy, while considering a just transition and affordability;
- b) Track global trends for the achievement of net zero;
- c) Track and advise on methods to optimize use of oceans as a carbon sink, as well as forests, wetlands, and depleted petroleum reservoirs;
- d) Upon request from the Minister respecting a particular policy or program matter within the mandate of the council, undertake analysis, and provide advice to the Minister; and
- e) Meet on a regular basis and provide advice to the Minister that synthesizes its analysis on programs, policies, and/or promising net zero pathways for Newfoundland and Labrador.

## **Revenues and Expenditures**

The Net Zero Advisory Council has no dedicated budget and costs incurred by the council are supported by the Department of Environment and Climate Change. No costs were incurred in 2024-25.

## **Highlights and Partnerships**

The Net Zero Advisory Council's focus throughout 2024-25 included the transportation, oil and gas, space heating in buildings, and waste sectors. The council also focused on Indigenous engagement in net zero planning. Recommendations on these sectors were submitted to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change throughout the year. Since its inception in 2021, the council has submitted 54 recommendations to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

The council met on 12 occasions in 2024-25. This included five meetings with stakeholders, and one meeting with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

# Report on Performance

## Objective Indicator for the 2024-25 year

The following objective and indicators outline accomplishments achieved for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

### 1. Policy Advice

By March 31, 2026, the Council will have provided comprehensive advice to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on foundational actions and potential policies and initiatives to make progress toward the achievement of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

**Objective 1:** By March 31, 2024, the Council will have completed an analysis of the approach to net-zero in other jurisdictions.

Indicators	Accomplishments
Completion of independent analysis of the approach to net-zero in other jurisdictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dunskey Energy + Climate Advisors was contracted in June 2023 to complete the analysis.</li><li>• The analysis included a review of sub-national jurisdictions in Canada (New Brunswick, British Columbia), the United States (Maine), United Kingdom (Scotland) and Australia (Tasmania).</li><li>• The analysis was completed in November 2023.</li></ul>
Meeting with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to convey key findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Council highlighted the jurisdictional analysis in its December 2023 advice document to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and committed to conducting further analysis on the report in 2024.</li><li>• Further analysis of the report was completed to inform the Council's recommendations in 2024.</li></ul>

**Objective 2:** By March 31 of each fiscal year in the planning period, the council will have provided advice to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on key policy areas that can facilitate progress towards the achievement of net zero greenhouse gas emissions. This objective will be applied in 2025 and 2026 (and was previously applied in 2024).

Indicators	Accomplishments												
Number of meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council met 12 times in 2024-25. All meetings were virtual.</li> </ul>												
Number of stakeholder engagement sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five meetings in 2024-25 included stakeholders in transportation, oil and gas, and waste sectors, as well as Indigenous organizations.</li> </ul>												
Number of meetings with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to provide analysis and advice regarding program, policies and/or promising pathways to net zero greenhouse gas emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council submitted recommendations to the Minister throughout the year, and, in December 2024, submitted a final list of all 54 recommendations made between 2021 and 2024.</li> <li>Net Zero Advisory Council submitted 25 recommendations as follows in 2024: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sector</th><th>Number of recommendations</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Transportation</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr> <td>Oil and Gas</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr> <td>Space Heating in Buildings</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr> <td>Waste</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Indigenous engagement</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table> </li> <li>The council met with the Minister to discuss its work for the 2021 to 2024 period.</li> <li>Beyond its sectoral focus, the council recommended that the work of the council continue beyond the current membership, which ended in December 2024.</li> </ul>	Sector	Number of recommendations	Transportation	6	Oil and Gas	7	Space Heating in Buildings	6	Waste	5	Indigenous engagement	1
Sector	Number of recommendations												
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## Opportunities and Challenges

The Net Zero Advisory Council took an economy-wide perspective for its work from 2021 to 2024. It provided 54 recommendations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and set a foundational path to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 for the oil and gas, mining, electricity, transportation, space heating in buildings, and waste sectors, in addition to how to increase Indigenous participation in net zero planning.

Looking ahead, provincial modeling initiatives must place increased emphasis on hard-to-abate sectors such as oil and gas, mining, and transportation to support the achievement of net zero objectives. The appointment of new members presents an opportunity to enhance this focus by incorporating direct expertise in these critical areas.

Reducing emissions in hard-to-abate sectors is challenging. It will require the development and deployment of new technologies, new regulatory frameworks, and actions to ensure the electricity sector remains decarbonized. While these factors are beyond the scope of the council, they highlight the challenges for new members.

## Financial Information

The Net Zero Advisory Council does not have a stand-alone budget and as a result, audited financial statements are not required.

Expenses associated with the council are funded through the Department of Environment and Climate Change. There were no incurred expenses for the council's activities for the 2024-25 fiscal year.