



## Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024

# Message from the Council

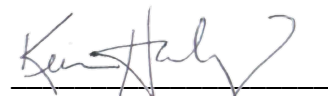
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As Chair of the Net Zero Advisory Council, I am pleased to present the Council's Annual Report for the period April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. The Council's mandate is to advise the provincial government, through the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, on policies and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve net zero by 2050. The Council is a Category 3 government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. Activities that have been completed by the Council meet the requirement of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for a Category 3 entity.

In accordance with the legislated requirements of the **Act**, the Council developed an activity plan for a three-year period from 2023-2026. The Council is accountable for the preparation of the plan and the achievable objectives and annual reports on the Council's activities. This annual report summarizes activities carried out for the for the period 2023-24. Areas of focus included the completion of a jurisdictional scan, as well as emissions reductions in the electricity, mining, transportation, and oil and gas sectors.

In December 2023 the Council supplied several recommendations to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change pertaining to the electricity and mining Sectors.

The Council is committed to informing ongoing and future decision making related to greenhouse has emission reduction policies and measures, including identifying actions the government and others can take to set the province on a strong path to achieve net zero emissions.

  
Kieran Hanley, Chair

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# 1. Overview

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The Net Zero Advisory Council (NZAC) was established in December 2021 through an Order-in-Council 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.

## a. Board Composition

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The Council is composed of eight (8) members from environmental organizations, education institutions, industry associations, private sector companies, and Indigenous organizations. The current Council members are:

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	Previously West Coast NL, now out of province (P.E.I)
Dr. Jonas Roberts	East Coast NL
Mr. George Russell	Labrador
Dr. Angela Carter	East Coast NL

Council members are appointed by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and serve a term of three (3) years with an opportunity for re-appointment. They serve as volunteers and there is no remuneration. The Council, with support from the Department of Environment and Climate Change staff providing secretariat services, works to advise provincial government on policies and measure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the province, with a particular focus on achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The Council is a Category 3 government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**.

The Council ensures diverse viewpoints are fairly heard and considered when providing advice and recommendations on greenhouse gas reduction pathways. The Council's mandate is to provide advice and to make recommendations to the provincial government. The government makes the final decisions on any courses of action that may be taken to reduce emissions.

## b. Mandate

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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 program, policies, and/or promising net-zero pathways for Newfoundland and Labrador.

### **c. Vision**

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The 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.

### **d. Revenues and Expenditures**

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The Council has no dedicated budget and costs incurred by the Council are supported by the Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC). ECC spent \$112, 600.00 on behalf of NZAC for a jurisdictional analysis.

## **2. Highlights and Partnerships**

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NZAC's continued focus throughout 2023-24 included completion of a review of actions completed and planned by five sub-national jurisdictions that have net zero targets, and provision of advice on the electricity and mining sectors. The electricity sector was chosen for analysis because of the vital role that near term decisions around its management and growth will play in achieving net zero by 2050. The mining sector was chosen for analysis because of its current contributions to GHG emissions in the province, its growth potential, and the degree to which its impact on net zero planning is tied to decisions made regarding the electricity sector. Starting January 2024, the Council has been working to provide advice on the oil and gas and transportation sectors.

### 3. Report on Performance

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#### Objective Indicators for the 2023-24 year

Objectives and indicators outline accomplishments achieved for the 2023-24 fiscal year. The two following objectives reflect NZAC's vision and are based on oil and gas and mining sectors in Newfoundland and Labrador.

#### 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></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 toward the achievement of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. This objective will be applied in 2024, 2025, and 2026.

Indicators	Accomplishments
Number of meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council met 16 times in 2023-24. All meetings were virtual.</li> </ul>
Number of stakeholder engagement sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six meetings in 2023-24 included experts in the electricity and oil and gas sectors, as well as the City of St. John's in the context of its climate emergency resolution and related planning initiatives. Stakeholder meetings with mining sector experts were held in 2022-23.</li> <li>Two meetings were with Dunskey Energy + Climate Consulting regarding the jurisdictional analysis.</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 a letter to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change in December 2023 outlining its activities in calendar year 2023. The submission highlighted the jurisdiction analysis and included recommendations related to electricity and mining.</li> </ul>

## 4. Opportunities and Challenges

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The Council represents an opportunity to build on the work that has been completed to date on achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The Council consists of likeminded individuals seeking to reduce emissions, all being very adept in their fields. The Council will continue to work with the Department of Environment and Climate Change to conduct consultations with stakeholders regarding the oil and gas and transportation sectors throughout 2024.

NZAC remains committed to pursuing its mandate and acknowledges that competing priorities for the Council's members, as well as the availability of experts, may continue to be a challenge for the Council.

## 5. Financial Information

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NZAC does not have a stand-alone budget and as a result, audited financial statements are not required. Expenses associated with NZAC are funded through ECC. NZAC incurred purchased services expenses of \$112,600.00, funded by ECC, to complete the jurisdictional analysis, identified above, during the 2023-24 fiscal year.