

# HIGH LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

## *Forestry*

1. DNR should act to restore public confidence by engaging the public with regular opportunities for consultation, committing to greater transparency and accountability, establishing a new regulatory regime for forest management, and becoming more relevant to rural landowners.
2. DNR must make climate change mitigation and adaptation an over-arching goal of forest management policy.
3. The new forest strategy must include a substantial transition away from clearcutting and toward uneven-age and restorative harvesting methods.
4. DNR should institute a policy of ecosystem-based management on the vast majority (90%) of the working forest on Crown land, and, as part of this policy, implement new best practices guidelines for harvesting and silviculture that incorporate ecosystem-based management.
5. The province should overhaul the Forest Sustainability Regulations to ensure that a substantially higher proportion of silviculture effort in Nova Scotia is directed to uneven-aged and restorative treatments. Over a five-year period, increase funding for quality-improvement silviculture activities (Category 7) to 50% of the total silviculture budget; educational workshops and woodlot management plans would be included in this funding.
6. The Nova Scotia government should state its preference for FSC certification, and work aggressively to increase the number of FSC-certified forestry operations in the province.
7. The Province should recognize that the permanent forest loss and liquidation harvesting negatively impact all forest values and users, and work aggressively to stem them both.
8. The Department of Natural Resources must ensure that the forest ecosystem is not further degraded by harvesting of biomass for biofuels; biomass harvesting must not compromise site productivity and habitat.
9. The Province must make the value-added forest products industry a priority of economic development.
10. The Province should develop an aggressive program to mitigate impacts from logging roads. The program should include targets for reducing logging road density by permanently decommissioning selected roads that are not essential for resource management.
11. The Province should recognize the critical role woodlot owners play in forest management by providing organisational support and encouraging quality improvement silviculture.

## *Mining*

1. The Government of Nova Scotia should support an independent full cost-benefit accounting of mining in Nova Scotia.
2. The Department of Natural Resources should review and adopt a cradle-to-cradle approach whereby they consider the life-cycle of the mined products and alternatives to mining.

3. The Department of Natural Resources should replace the Integrated Resource Management process with Integrated Environmental Management which would consider the value of all land uses, including non consumptive land uses.
4. The Department of Natural Resources should seek zero discharge of mining effluent into lakes, rivers and groundwater and a reduction in greenhouse gases from mining operations.
5. The government of Nova Scotia must allow for mineral rights to be revoked on lands protected by nature preserves or conservation easements.
6. The Nova Scotia government should legislate a Mineral Aggregate Act to govern the mining or quarrying of aggregates in Nova Scotia. with respect to environmental assessments for quarries under 4 hectares, royalties, returns to the local community, and reclamation.
7. The government should recognize the environmental and social values practiced by mineral companies that work in Nova Scotia by encouraging a third-party Mineral Stewardship Certification system for new mines in Nova Scotia.
8. DNR should work with the Department of Environment to support an effective environmental assessment process, particularly with respect to ensuring meaningful public participation.
9. The government of Nova Scotia should legislate a permanent moratorium on uranium mining.
10. DNR should expand the Mining Matters conference to include non-industry perspectives.

### *Parks*

1. Responsibility for high-level systems planning of the provincial parks network should be moved to the protected areas branch of the Environment Department. This should include prioritizing park reserve properties for protection and determining the appropriate designation of provincial park properties.
2. All provincial park management plans should be orientated to minimize damage to nature and interference with natural processes.
3. Further protection for coastal parks and beaches: a strong Provincial Park system is part of the solution for increased beach protection. Clear links between the provincial park system and a comprehensive coastal policy must be established.
4. The Department of Natural Resources should develop indicators to monitor ecosystem health and to track changes in provincial parks.
5. Marine parks and protected areas should become part of the province's protected area mandate.
6. The province must act to ensure coastal areas are well managed and adequately protected from inappropriate development and the effects of climate change.
7. Enforce all environmental regulations in provincial parks and protected beaches.
8. The province should increase public and non-motorized transportation options to rural areas

and provincial parks.

### *Biodiversity*

1. Responsibilities for wildlife and biodiversity conservation, including for the *Wildlife Act*, *Endangered Species Act*, and wildlife habitat and watercourse provisions of the *Forests Act*, should be transferred to the provincial Environment Department.
2. Conservation of biodiversity should be a priority for all branches and divisions of DNR, not just the Wildlife Division, and the Department should consider adopting a new ethic that explicitly values biodiversity.
3. Sable Island holds a special place in the hearts of Nova Scotians and the Government of Nova Scotia should continue to invest in its protection.
4. New data indicate that bird populations are under greater threat than previously thought. The Department needs to implement policies that protect the breeding habitat of birds.
5. The Department of Natural Resources should move quickly to protect our coasts, as the obstacles, including cost, will only increase with increasing levels of coastal development.
6. The Government of Nova Scotia should implement strategies and programs that have been developed at the national level, and abide by the terms of international agreements relating to invasive exotic species.
7. The Department of Natural Resources needs to actively support the government's legislated goal of protecting 12% of the province for conservation and to treat this as a priority for action.
8. Nova Scotia should include marine diversity in any diversity protection legislation.

### *Coastal*

1. The provincial government should embrace its responsibilities to conserve Nova Scotia's coasts, and expand protections of coastal areas and associated ecosystem functions.  
*Ecology Action Centre Submission to xiv Voluntary Planning*
2. The province should identify key climate change vulnerabilities and prioritize adaptation by preventing inappropriate coastal development and infrastructure.
3. The Department should revise and strengthen the Beaches Act and designate new beaches under the Act.