



Carbon Pricing

An Update

Atlantica Centre for Energy

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Carbon emission reductions – How are we doing?

When discussing carbon emissions and our path forward, we can start by looking back.

In 1990, a quarter century ago and a baseline year in emissions targets, New Brunswick's CO₂ emissions were just under 16 Mega-Tonnes (15.89). Fast forward to 2013 (most current year for comparable data) and our emissions were...just under 16 MT (15.68).

During those 23 years, emissions peaked at over 22 MT. Most sector's emissions increased, but gains were offset through emissions reductions in power generation (over 50 percent from its peak), resulting in our province's net-reduction of CO₂ emissions.

The situation in Nova Scotia is similar, emissions peaked at 24 MT, and are now below 1990 levels.

Is this reduction in our emissions enough? In a word, No. The world has committed us to a path of further GHG reductions. The government of New Brunswick's emissions target for 2050 is a further reduction of over 10 MT from today's emissions to just 5 MT in total.

As individuals we can do our part by reducing our electricity consumption and our transportation emissions. This will move the bar marginally in the big scheme of things, but every bit helps.

Our emissions can roughly be characterized as 25% from electricity, 30% from industry, 25% from transportation, and the rest from buildings, agriculture and waste management.

As for industry and the electrical generation sector, there are significant gains to be made.

This will come from creating technology that will assist industry in reducing its energy use and emissions; introducing more hydro and other non-emitting generation; and by transitioning to low-emitting fuels like natural gas and bio-renewables.

Carbon pricing policy is under development in each province in Canada. We need to participate by creating best practises that reflect our realities. While we must do our part, we must also acknowledge that New Brunswick's total emissions are less than one-tenth that of Alberta and Ontario.

Here in New Brunswick we require a suitable policy that will acknowledge our unique challenges such as a small, widely dispersed population, and industry that is energy-intensive and export-dependent.

We need a policy that will protect the vulnerable of society; allows existing industries time to innovate and transition; acknowledges gains already achieved; encourages behavioral change by reducing emissions; stimulates innovations in efficiency and consumption; and sets a competitive personal and corporate tax level.

If we merely place a price on carbon, i.e. a new tax that just funds the old ways of government, we will cripple our economy.

Revenue that is generated from carbon pricing must directly fund innovation and encourage adapting new processes and technologies. This revenue can assist current industry while also stimulating new investments in our province. We must continue to be competitive with the rest of the world.

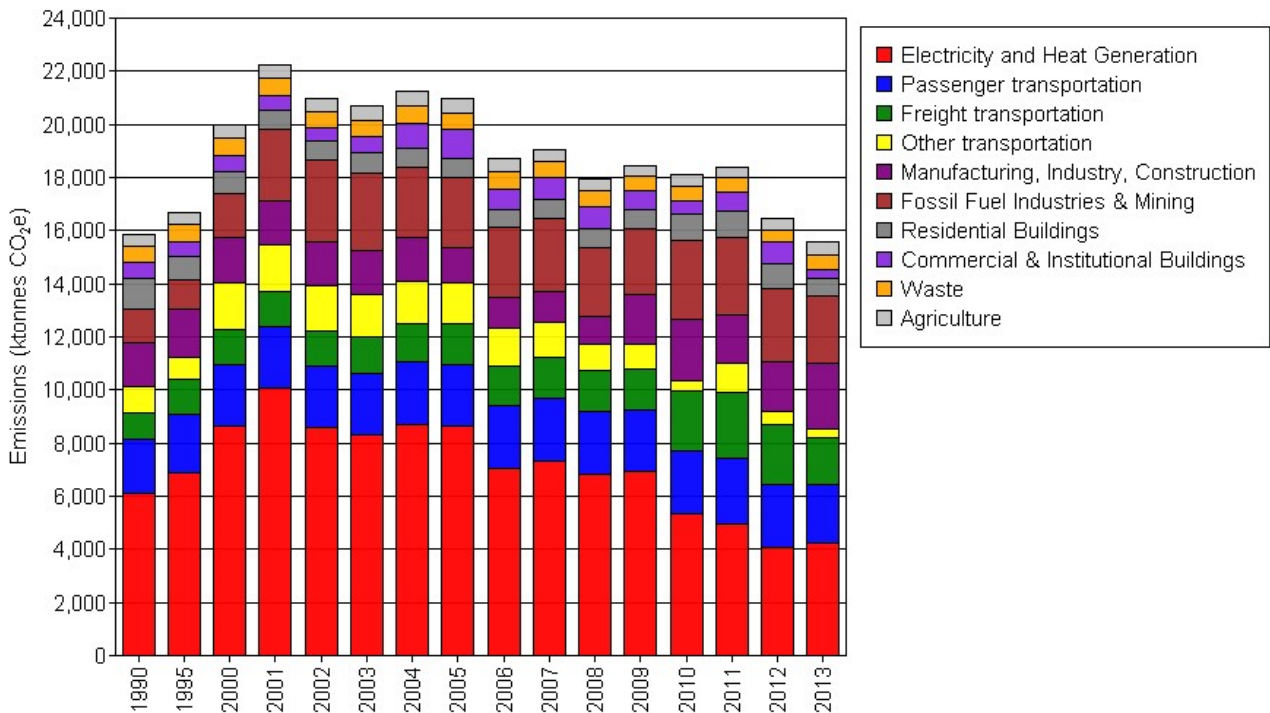
Across Canada during the 30 year transitional phase, carbon fuels will remain essential to our economy. As we create these innovations over time, we need a solid transition strategy that bridges our current carbon economy to a new “emissions-free” economy.

From coast-to-coast we need to reduce imported crude oil; reduce use of high-emitting fuels like coal for heating and electrical generation; increase non-emitting electricity generation; and curtail transportation emissions across the board. To do this, we require pipelines to reduce distribution emissions, greater access to natural gas, expand non-emitting power generation, and incentives to reduce vehicle emissions.

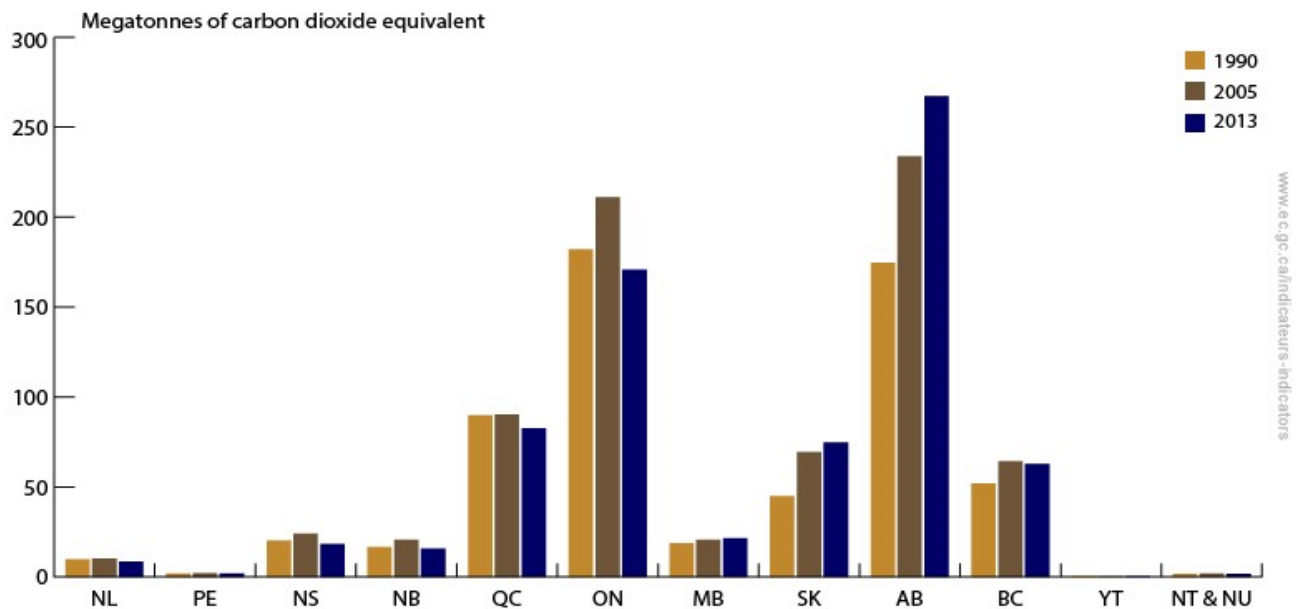
This transitional phase requires support from everyone. The longer it is delayed, the farther we are from reaching our end goals.

It took 25 years to reduce our emissions back to 1990 levels, and going forward we need to double those reductions. The challenge in combatting global climate change is to avoid crippling existing industry and taxing citizens for carbon use without incenting change.

The New Brunswick government must allow existing industry to remain competitive, and encourage the great minds that create breakthroughs to do what they do best – innovate. The only way to meet our aggressive climate change goals is through adaptive and mitigation opportunities that will enable us to slowly transition to an emissions-free environment without devastating economic pain. The hard work is still ahead of us.



Source: Province of New Brunswick





About Atlantica Centre for Energy

The Atlantica Centre for Energy is dedicated to increasing energy literacy for community leaders and stakeholders. The Centre has expanded to include leading energy professionals, national and international organizations in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Labrador, Alberta, Ontario and New England.

The Centre serves as a bridge between organizations operating in the energy sector and the community to help realize opportunities associated with energy resources in Atlantic Canada and the American Northeast. It provides a meeting ground for government, the education and research sectors, and the community at large to foster partnerships and engage in energy-related issues.

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