

Honourable Ron Chisholm
Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

January 9th, 2009

Dear Minister Chisholm,

In June 2008, your Government announced its commitment to develop a Sustainable Coastal Development Strategy by 2010. We commend the government for taking on this significant initiative. We would like to be formally involved, in a consultative capacity, in the development of the Sustainable Coastal Development Strategy. We are requesting a meeting to discuss mechanisms whereby our input can be formally included in the process.

The undersigned organizations support the development and implementation of a Sustainable Coastal Development strategy. Specifically, we expect the Strategy will address the following pressing coastal issues: deteriorating coastal water quality, the destruction of coastal ecosystems and habitats, the loss of marine biodiversity, protection of traditional fisheries, maintaining coastal access, and the vulnerability of our coastal areas to climate change. There is a pressing need for clearer, integrated governance and effective planning that involves the residents of coastal communities.

An effective Coastal Development Strategy must result in action on the problems facing our coast. Given the sensitivity of Nova Scotia's coasts to climate change impacts such as sea level rise, storm surges and accelerated erosion, the province should work with municipalities to reduce the vulnerability of our coastal communities to climate change. Secondly, we expect the Strategy to include federal-provincial-municipal cooperation and coordination on comprehensive land-use planning that addresses coastal issues through use of tools such as zoning, set-backs and the establishment of coastal marine protected areas within consistently applied and enforced regulations. Furthermore, Nova Scotia's coast contains ecosystems of global significance and habitats that support a high diversity of wildlife, some of which are species at risk, and thus require protection and enhancement.

The economy will benefit from an investment in coastal management. As articulated by the Provincial government in the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*, the health of Nova Scotia's environment and its economy are interconnected. Responsible coastal development is essential to the health and growth of our coastal communities and will include protecting employment in the traditional fisheries and tourism sectors. Coastal land use planning will ensure that development proceeds in appropriate areas without compromising biodiversity and valuable ecosystem services, such as drinking water and erosion control provided by coastal watersheds.

We, the undersigned organizations, are committed to supporting the process and the implementation. We can offer expertise, help generate research and solutions, and help secure broad-based public engagement through our established networks of grassroots connections.

As the pressures on Nova Scotia's coast continue to increase, a comprehensive and clearly articulated Coastal Development Strategy is critical to protect this most valuable and vulnerable asset. As the process unfolds, decisions leading to the implementation of a Sustainable Coastal Development Strategy need to be informed by those who will be most affected - the citizens of Nova Scotia. Once again, we congratulate the Province of Nova Scotia for its commitment to sustainable development for Nova Scotia.

We look forward to receiving a response by February 28th, 2009 to our request for a meeting to discuss effective ways to integrate the coastal communities and the NGOs which represent them into the coastal governance process.

Sincerely,

Antigonish Harbour Watershed Association
Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation
Bras D'Or Stewardship Society
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
Canoe Kayak Nova Scotia
Clean Annapolis River Project
Clean Nova Scotia
Coastal Access Committee
Coastal Coalition of Nova Scotia
Coastal Communities Network
Ecology Action Centre
Fresh Air Society
Friends of Crescent Beach, Green Bay and Area Society
Friends of the Pugwash Estuary
Friends of Port Mouton Bay
Halifax Field Naturalists
Harrison Lewis Centre
Kingsburg Coastal Conservancy
Marie Celeste Society
Oakland-Indian Point Residents Association
Partnership for Sustainable Development of Digby Neck and Islands Society
Nature Nova Scotia
Nova Scotia Sea School
Nova Scotia Nature Trust
Sierra Club – Atlantic Canada Chapter

South Shore Naturalists
Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence Coalition on Sustainability
Silver Sands Conservation Society
St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association
Surfriders Association of Nova Scotia
Tusket River Environmental Protection Association

cc. Honourable Rodney MacDonald, Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
Honourable David Morse, Minister of Environment
Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, Minister of Natural Resources
Honourable Richard Hurlburt, Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
Honourable Michael Baker, Minister of Finance and Aboriginal Affairs
Honourable Murray Scott, Minister of Economic and Rural Development
Honourable Barry Barnet, Minister of Energy
Honourable Bill Dooks, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage
Honourable Brooke Taylor, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal

Darrell Dexter, Leader of the Opposition, New Democratic Party
Stephen McNeil, Leader Nova Scotia Liberal Party

Sterling Belliveau, Opposition Critic, Fisheries and Aquaculture
Vicki Conrad, Opposition Critic, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal
Becky Kent, Opposition Critic, Services Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
Charlie Parker, Opposition Critic, Natural Resources
Michele Raymond, Opposition Critic Tourism and Culture
Graham Steele, Opposition Critic, Environment
Clarrie MacKinnon, Opposition Critic, Economic Development
John MacDonell, Opposition Critic, Aboriginal Affairs

Harold Theriault, Liberal Critic Fisheries and Aquaculture
Keith Colwell, Liberal Critic, Environment
Leo Glavine, Liberal Critic, Natural Resources
Wayne Gaudet, Liberal Critic Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal
Diane Whalen, Liberal Critic Tourism, Culture, and Heritage and Service Nova Scotia
and Municipal Relations
Michel Samson, Liberal Critic, Aboriginal Affairs
Manning MacDonald, Liberal Critic, Economic Development
Services Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Warden Lloyd Hines, President, Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities
Faith Scattolon, Regional Director General, Maritimes Region, Fisheries and Oceans
Canada
Darlene Grant Fiander, President, Tourism Industr Association of Nova Scotia

