

# French-language Services Plan

2020–2021

Environment

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French-language Services Plan  
Department of Environment  
April 2020  
ISBN: 978-1-989654-53-8

# **French-language Services Plan 2020–21**

## *Nova Scotia Environment*

*Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2020-2021 »*

### **Message from the deputy head or CEO**

On behalf of Nova Scotia Environment, I am pleased to present our French-language Services Plan for 2020-21.

Nova Scotia Environment recognizes the importance of giving Nova Scotians access to departmental programs and services in their choice of English or French. We are committed to building our capacity to meet the needs of our Acadian and francophone community. We will continue to support our staff to attend French training courses and will continue to translate important information related to health, safety and security of our citizens and communities. We prioritise providing public consultations in both English and French.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, as we continue to improve our service delivery to Acadians and francophones across the province. We welcome comments and suggestions from all Nova Scotians on our French Language Services.

Deputy Frances Martin

### **What we're doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and francophone community**

We recognize the importance of French-language services and we endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations. We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French, and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programmes, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. To achieve this aim, we collaborate with other designated public institutions across government – including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie – through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. We greatly value this partnership, which ensures a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province's Acadian and francophone community.

We encourage Nova Scotians to request services from government in French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard by participating on agencies, boards and commissions, which are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office. As we continue to maintain and improve our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress, and we invite you to share with us your comments or questions by contacting our French-language services coordinator. If you wish to make a formal complaint regarding French-language services, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

#### **French-language services coordinator:**

Andrew Morrison ([Andrew.Morrison2@novascotia.ca](mailto:Andrew.Morrison2@novascotia.ca), 902-219-1686)

## Services we offer in French

NSE ensures that every public consultation, such as the recent Coastal Protection Act consultations (<https://novascotia.ca/coast/>) and the current Parks and Protected Areas (<https://novascotia.ca/parksandprotectedareas/>) is conducted in both English and French. Additionally, we provide key documents to the public in both languages. The French versions of these documents can be found here: <https://novascotia.ca/nse/resources/publications-fr.asp>. Other French-language Services we provide include the following:

- Well water testing advice in both languages (<https://novascotia.ca/well-water-testing/>)
- News releases in both languages where appropriate, for example
  - Blue-green algae blooms
  - Boil water advisories
- Bilingual Court forms, such as Summary Offence Tickets, are used when available
- Documents from Federal/Provincial Partnerships are often available in both languages, for example:
  - Work with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
  - National Farm Animal Care Council codes of practice
- Translation services as required through Communications NS.

## How we communicate with the public in French

Nova Scotia Environment makes every effort to respond to French inquiries in French. We have identified staff members who have the ability and willingness to provide services in the French language, in response to both verbal and written requests from the Acadian and francophone community.

When a request is beyond the capacity of these staff members to effectively respond in the French language, the staff member is directed to contact the French-language Services Coordinator. From there, proper channeling of the request is completed to ensure an adequate response is provided.

## What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2019–20

Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administration frameworks. This was achieved by preparing and publishing the department's French-language Services Plan, and by working with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie on the ongoing implantation of the French-language Services Act.

Strategic Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programs to the public. Nova Scotia Environment continued to provide verbal and written responses to French requests. Key consultations, media releases, and other communications materials were made available in French, specifically those relating to health, safety and security. French language training was delivered to several employees and employees were hired that have French language skills. Information that is of relevance to the Acadian and francophone community is made available in French.

Strategic Objective 3: Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community. Nova Scotia Environment continued to ensure that all major consultation exercises, such as the Coastal Protection Act consultation, consider French-language services.

## **How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2020–21**

### **Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administrative frameworks**

*Goal 1: Review current Nova Scotia Environment French-language Services*

#### *Planned Measures*

- Update French-language Service policy if required.
- Update French-language Service inventories.
- Address any gaps found in current French-language Services.

### **Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programmes to the public**

*Goal 2.1: Maintain currently levels of service as appropriate.*

#### *Planned Measures*

- Continue to provide verbal and written responses to French requests.
- Continue to make key consultations, media releases, and other communications materials available in French, specifically those relating to health, safety and security.
- Continue to support staff with French-language training options.
- Ensure information that is of relevance to the Acadian and francophone community is made available in French.

*Goal 2.2: Improve Nova Scotia Environment's French-language service delivery*

#### *Planned Measures*

- Translate additional documents where relevant and possible
- Create a French-language Services Coordinator fact sheet to distribute to all Nova Scotia Environment staff to ensure all staff are aware of the position and services available.
- Update the list of French language contacts within the department.

### **Objective 3: Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community**

*Goal 3: Strive to make multiple points of French-language communication available to the public*

#### *Planned Measures*

- Continue to ensure that any major consultation exercises consider French-language services
- Continue to provide health, safety and security information to the public in both languages, across all relevant media.
- Encourage the Acadian and francophone communities to request services in the language of their choice.

### **Priorities of the Acadian and Francophone Community**

Nova Scotia Environment will continue to work with Acadian Affairs and Francophonie and other stakeholders to address priorities identified by the Acadian and francophone community related to protection of the environment, human health, and the welfare of farm animals.

### **Conclusion: Contribution to the Preservation and Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community**

Nova Scotia Environment recognizes the importance of working with Acadian Affairs and Francophonie and other stakeholders to enhance French-language services provided by the department across the province. Our French Language Services Plan for this year outlines the department's path forward to work with Acadian Affairs and Francophonie to ensure the Acadian and francophone community is well represented.