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GLOBAL WARMING TODAY

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Report Urges Nova Scotia to Ramp Up Energy Efficiency Efforts

GPI Atlantic, an independent nonprofit research organization, recently announced the release of a new report which indicates that Nova Scotia's heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels is unsustainable and recommends "immediate action in the form of dedicated investment in renewable energy and cutting the high level of current energy use."

According to GPI Atlantic, Nova Scotians are among the highest energy users in the world, with total demand up by 12 percent since 1991. Additionally, the province's heavy reliance on imported coal produces per capita sulfur dioxide emissions that are seven times the Canadian average.

GPI Atlantic noted that its study identified and assessed 30 economic, social, health, environmental and institutional indicators to measure progress in the energy sector in Nova Scotia, with only two of the 30 indicators indicating "clear signs of progress towards sustainability."

Among the study's findings are that greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions from Nova Scotia's energy sector currently produce more than \$600 million annually in damage costs, that the proportion of electric generating capacity from renewable sources in the province has declined in the last 20 years, and that the province has no distributed generation and has seen minimal investment in combined heat and power generation.

"There are also key data gaps on vital energy-related issues, making it difficult to produce well-informed policy and to track progress," said GPI Atlantic. "For example, the province makes available virtually no data on efficiency, despite its vital and increasing importance...."

The study's recommendations include that the provincial government sets "ambitious" targets to increase the portion of renewable energy produced and used in the province, expands combined heat and power generation, curbs high demand through "concerted conservation and energy efficiency measures," establishes long-term reduction targets for all pollutant emissions, meets and exceeds Kyoto Protocol targets for greenhouse gas emissions, and moves towards a low-carbon future through supply and demand actions.

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