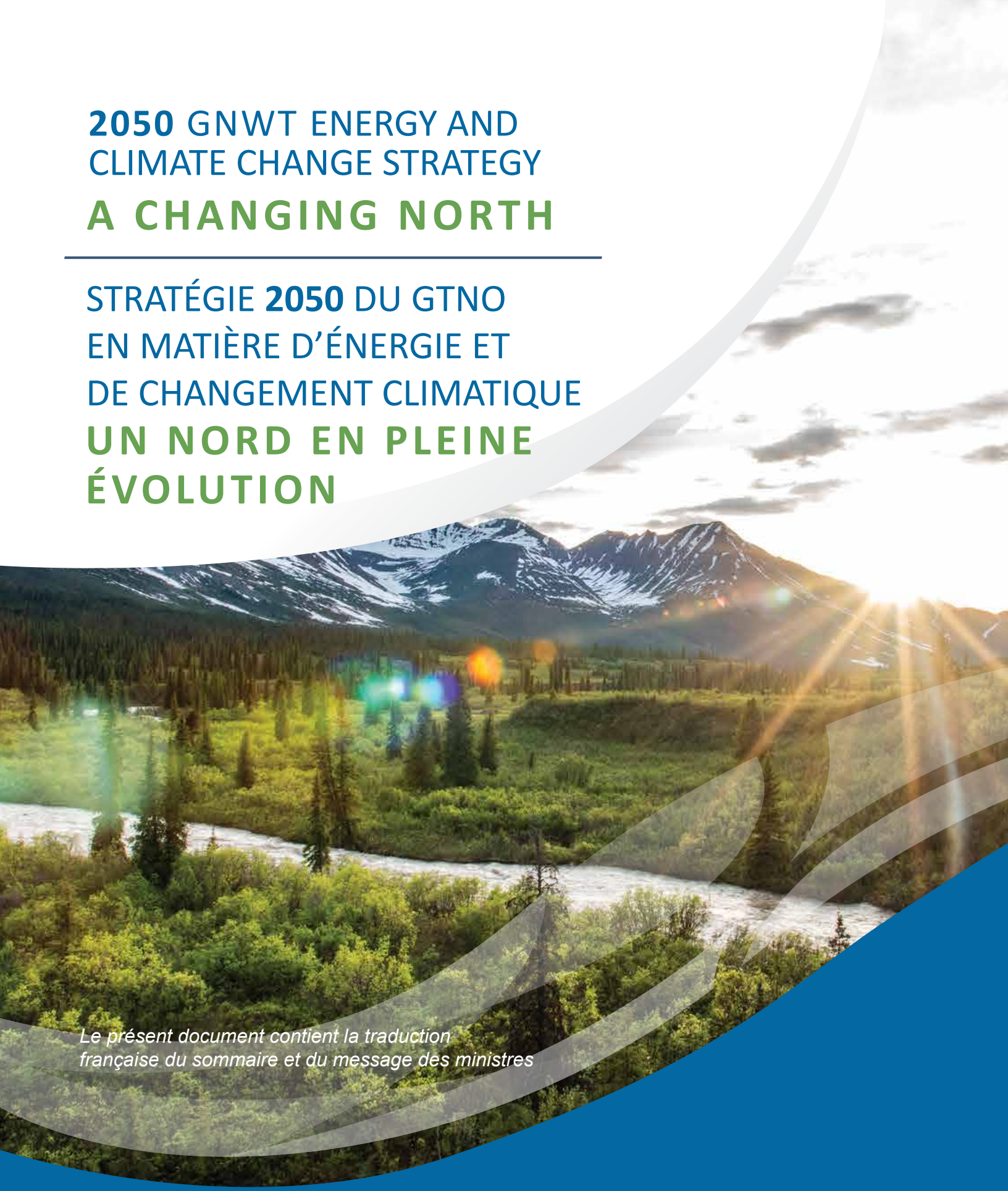
2050 GNWT ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

A CHANGING NORTH

STRATÉGIE 2050 DU GTNO EN MATIÈRE D'ÉNERGIE ET DE CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE

UN NORD EN PLEINE ÉVOLUTION



Le présent document contient la traduction française du sommaire et du message des ministres

2026

Government of | Gouvernement des
Northwest Territories
Territoires du Nord-Ouest

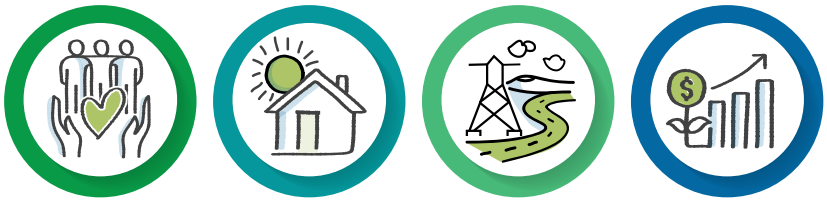


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Caroline Wawzonek

Minister Responsible for Strategic Infrastructure, Energy and Supply Chains

Ministre responsable de l'Infrastructure stratégique, de l'Énergie et des Chaînes d'approvisionnement

Across the Northwest Territories, we are seeing the effects of climate change on our communities, infrastructure, and economy. At the same time, we face the challenge of modernizing aging energy systems and building the infrastructure needed to support a strong and resilient future.

The 2050 GNWT Energy and Climate Change Strategy provides a long-term roadmap to help guide these efforts. It recognizes that reliable energy, dependable transportation networks, strong supply chains, and resilient infrastructure are essential to the wellbeing of Northerners and to future economic development.

As Minister Responsible for Strategic Infrastructure, Energy and Supply Chains, I am committed to advancing practical, affordable, and made-in-the-North solutions that strengthen energy security, reduce emissions where possible, and support communities across the territory. Achieving these goals will require collaboration with Indigenous governments and organizations, community governments, industry, and the federal government.

This Strategy sets a clear direction for the next 25 years. Through careful planning, responsible investment, and strong partnerships, we can build the infrastructure and energy systems needed to support a changing North and create opportunities for future generations.

Nous constatons les effets du changement climatique sur les collectivités, les infrastructures et l'économie des Territoires du Nord-Ouest . Au même moment, nous sommes confrontés au défi de moderniser les systèmes énergétiques vieillissants et de mettre en place les infrastructures nécessaires pour construire un avenir fort et résilient.

La Stratégie 2050 du GTNO en matière d'énergie et de changement climatique fournit une feuille de route à long terme pour orienter ces efforts. On y reconnaît qu'une énergie fiable, des réseaux de transport sûrs, des chaînes d'approvisionnement solides et des infrastructures sont essentiels au bien-être des Ténois et au développement économique à venir.

En tant que ministre responsable de l'Infrastructure stratégique, de l'Énergie et des Chaînes d'approvisionnement, je m'engage à proposer des solutions pratiques, abordables et conçues dans le Nord pour renforcer la sécurité énergétique, réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre lorsque possible et soutenir les collectivités des TNO. Pour atteindre ces objectifs, nous collaborerons avec les gouvernements et les organisations autochtones, les administrations communautaires, l'industrie et le gouvernement fédéral.

Cette stratégie définit un parcours clair pour les 25 prochaines années. Grâce à une planification rigoureuse, à des investissements responsables et à des partenariats solides, nous pouvons mettre en place les infrastructures et les systèmes énergétiques nécessaires pour soutenir un Nord en pleine évolution et élargir les perspectives pour les futures générations.



Jay MacDonald

Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Ministre de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique

Climate change is no longer a future concern for the Northwest Territories. Northerners are already experiencing its impacts through changing landscapes, thawing permafrost, more frequent wildfires, flooding, and other extreme events that affect our communities and way of life.

The 2050 GNWT Energy and Climate Change Strategy establishes a whole-of-government approach to addressing these challenges. It reflects what we have heard from Indigenous governments and organizations, communities, residents, and partners: that we must work together to build resilience, prepare for future risks, and support a successful transition to a lower-carbon future.

As Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I am committed to ensuring our decisions are informed by the best available science, Indigenous knowledge, and the lived experiences of Northerners. This Strategy focuses on practical actions that will help protect people, communities, ecosystems, and critical infrastructure while strengthening our ability to adapt to changing conditions.

The work ahead will require collaboration, innovation, and sustained commitment. By working together, we can ensure the Northwest Territories remains a safe, resilient, and prosperous place to live, work, and raise future generations.

Aux Territoires du Nord-Ouest, le changement climatique n'est plus seulement une préoccupation concernant l'avenir. Les Ténois en subissent déjà les effets sur leurs collectivités et leur mode de vie : paysages changeants, fonte du pergélisol, feux de forêt plus fréquents, inondations et autres phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes.

La Stratégie 2050 du GTNO en matière d'énergie et de changement climatique prévoit une approche gouvernementale globale pour répondre à ces enjeux. Elle tient compte de ce que nous ont fait savoir les gouvernements et organisations autochtones, les collectivités, les résidents et nos partenaires : il nous faut travailler ensemble pour bâtir notre résilience, nous préparer pour les risques à venir et soutenir une transition réussie vers un avenir à faibles émissions de carbone.

En tant que ministre de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique, je suis déterminé à m'assurer que nos décisions reposent sur les meilleures données scientifiques disponibles, les connaissances autochtones et les expériences vécues des Ténois. La Stratégie est axée sur des mesures concrètes qui contribueront à protéger les résidents, les collectivités, les écosystèmes et les infrastructures cruciales, et qui renforceront notre capacité à nous adapter aux conditions changeantes.

Le travail qui nous attend nécessitera de la collaboration, de l'innovation et un engagement sans faille. En travaillant ensemble, nous pouvons faire en sorte que les Territoires du Nord-Ouest demeurent un lieu sécuritaire, résilient et prospère où il fait bon vivre, travailler et élever les prochaines générations.

Executive Summary

Across the Northwest Territories, people continue to see more signs of climate change in their daily lives. Weather is less predictable, the land is changing, permafrost is thawing, and there are more frequent and intense floods, droughts, and wildfires. Our best knowledge and modelling predict that these changes will have a defining impact on the lives of Northerners, affecting how we travel on the land, maintain cultural identity, and live safely in our homes and communities.

In 2024, the GNWT committed to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, requiring a major transformation in the way energy is supplied, produced, managed, and used in the NWT. This is happening at a time energy systems are ageing and need to be modernized to meet the needs of Northerners for the decades to come.

Canada's North is under pressure to change. Developing the NWT's energy potential will reduce the reliance on fossil fuel imports while advancing energy affordability and supporting progress towards our climate objectives. Critical public infrastructure and services, such as supply chains, buildings, and energy systems, will need to adapt to increasing climate change impacts. These are opportunities to build transformative infrastructure to support a lower-carbon future, investments, and economic development.

The *2050 GNWT Energy and Climate Change Strategy* ("the Strategy") brings together the whole of the GNWT around clear energy and climate change-related priorities for the next 25 years and sets out how the GNWT will support a changing North. It takes a risk-informed approach focused on what the GNWT can control and deliver. Residents have called for better coordination, stronger partnerships, and greater support for local solutions; this strategy reflects those priorities and sets a clear path forward. This people-centred strategy is built around enabling conditions that allow communities, economies, and governments to adapt amid climate change pressures and the energy transition.

All GNWT departments and some key agencies (e.g. NT Power Corporation, Housing NWT) contributed to the development of this strategy and will be involved in implementation. Achieving the vision and goals will require collaboration within the GNWT and partners, inclusive engagement with all levels of government, communities, and other partners, and a flexible, adaptive approach to adjust to new and emerging circumstances over the Strategy's 25-year life.

Implementation will use a cyclic, coordinated delivery model that uses existing GNWT mechanisms to maximize benefits for residents in an affordable way. Implementation plans for each cycle will identify links to GNWT mandates, strategies, and policies as well as responsibilities for advancing the priorities and reporting on key indicators. The priorities identified to advance the Strategy's goals and objectives will guide where efforts and resources will be focussed. They will be reviewed and updated for each cycle to reflect progress and changing circumstances.

Clear accountability mechanisms will support measurable results and continuous improvement through defined roles and responsibilities, transparent reporting, measurable targets, and regular monitoring. Reporting will support coordinated decision-making and ensure accountability without creating undue administrative burden, provide an evidence base for funding requests, and inform planning for future cycles so the GNWT can remain adaptive and responsive.

Strategy at a Glance

VISION

As the climate changes and the NWT transitions to a net-zero energy future, people are safe and well, communities are safe and livable, infrastructure and supply chains are dependable, and the economy can adapt and grow.



People are safe and well

GOALS

1. Residents are supported to protect their physical and mental wellbeing.
2. Residents can safely access the land and water for cultural, harvesting, and livelihood activities.



Communities are safe and livable

GOALS

3. Community-based infrastructure and services are reliable, resilient, safe, and lower-carbon.
4. Homes and buildings are safe, resilient, energy efficient, and lower-carbon.



Infrastructure and supply chains are dependable

GOALS

5. Corridor infrastructure and supply chains provide dependable and increasingly lower-carbon movement of people, goods, and services.
6. Electricity systems are resilient, cost-effective, and support emissions reduction targets and economic development.



The economy can adapt and grow

GOALS

7. The private sector adapts, innovates, invests, and grows .
8. The workforce has the knowledge, skills, and capability to meet the needs of a lower-carbon, climate change adapted future.

Sommaire

Aux Territoires du Nord-Ouest (TNO), les signes du changement climatique se multiplient dans la vie quotidienne. Les conditions météorologiques deviennent moins prévisibles, les paysages changent, le pergélisol dégèle, tandis que les inondations, les sécheresses et les feux de forêt se font plus fréquents et plus intenses. Selon nos meilleures connaissances et modélisations, ces changements auront une incidence déterminante sur la vie des Ténois, dans la mesure où ils affecteront la façon dont nous nous déplaçons, dont nous maintenons notre identité culturelle et dont nous préservons notre sécurité dans nos maisons comme dans nos collectivités.

En 2024, le gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (GTNO) s'est engagé à atteindre la carboneutralité d'ici 2050, ce qui nécessite une transformation majeure dans la façon de fournir, de produire, de gérer et d'utiliser l'énergie aux TNO. Cet engagement intervient alors que les systèmes énergétiques sont vieillissants et qu'ils doivent être modernisés afin de répondre aux besoins des Ténois pour les décennies à venir.

Le Nord canadien est soumis à des pressions pour changer. Le développement du potentiel énergétique des TNO permettra de réduire la dépendance à l'égard des importations de combustibles fossiles, tout en rendant l'énergie plus abordable et en contribuant à l'atteinte de nos objectifs climatiques. Les infrastructures et services publics essentiels, tels que les chaînes d'approvisionnement, les bâtiments et les réseaux énergétiques, devront s'adapter aux répercussions croissantes du changement climatique. C'est donc l'occasion de construire des infrastructures transformatrices, qui favoriseront un avenir à faibles émissions de carbone, en plus de promouvoir les investissements et le développement économique.

La Stratégie 2050 du GTNO en matière d'énergie et de changements climatiques (la « Stratégie ») rassemble tout le GTNO autour de priorités claires en matière d'énergie et de gestion du changement climatique pour les 25 prochaines années. Elle définit également la manière dont le GTNO soutiendra le Nord dans son évolution. L'approche adoptée tient compte des risques et met l'accent sur ce que le GTNO peut contrôler et mettre en œuvre. Les résidents ayant demandé une meilleure coordination, des partenariats plus solides et un soutien accru en faveur des solutions locales, la Stratégie reflète ces priorités et trace clairement la voie à suivre. La Stratégie est axée sur les personnes : elle prévoit la création de conditions favorables qui permettront aux collectivités, aux économies et aux gouvernements de s'adapter dans un contexte de pressions liées au changement climatique et à la transition énergétique.

Tous les ministères du GTNO et certains organismes clés – notamment la Société d'énergie des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et Habitation TNO – ont contribué à l'élaboration de cette Stratégie et participeront à sa mise en œuvre. La concrétisation de l'ambition énoncée et des buts établis nécessitera une collaboration entre le GTNO et ses partenaires, une mobilisation incluant tous les ordres de gouvernement, les collectivités et les autres partenaires, ainsi qu'une approche souple et évolutive pour s'adapter aux nouvelles circonstances qui émergeront au cours des 25 années que couvre la Stratégie.

La mise en œuvre se fera de façon cyclique et coordonnée et fera appel aux mécanismes existants du GTNO, afin de maximiser les avantages pour les résidents tout en tenant compte de l'abordabilité. Les plans de mise en œuvre relatifs à chaque cycle seront arrimés aux mandats, aux stratégies et aux politiques du GTNO, ainsi qu'aux responsabilités fixées en matière d'avancement des priorités et de production de rapports sur les indicateurs clés. Les priorités définies pour mettre en œuvre les buts et objectifs de la Stratégie orienteront la mobilisation des efforts et des ressources; elles seront réexaminées et mises à jour au fil de chaque cycle afin de refléter les progrès et l'évolution des circonstances.

Des mécanismes clairs de responsabilisation permettront d'obtenir des résultats mesurables et une amélioration continue : définition des rôles et des responsabilités, rapports transparents, cibles mesurables et surveillance régulière. Les rapports aideront à la prise de décisions coordonnée et garantiront la reddition de comptes sans pour autant créer un fardeau administratif excessif, ils fourniront une base de données probantes pour les demandes de financement et ils orienteront la planification des cycles futurs, afin que le GTNO puisse continuer à s'adapter et à répondre aux besoins.

La Stratégie en bref

VISION

Alors que le climat change et que les TNO optent pour un avenir énergétique carboneutre, les populations sont en sécurité et en bonne santé, les collectivités collectivités sont sûres et vivables, les infrastructures et les chaînes d'approvisionnement sont fiables, l'économie peut s'adapter et se développer.



Les populations sont en sécurité et en bonne santé

OBJECTIF

1

Les résidents reçoivent le soutien nécessaire pour protéger leur bien-être physique et mental.

2

Les résidents peuvent accéder en toute sécurité aux terres et à l'eau pour des activités culturelles, de récolte et de subsistance.



Les collectivités sont sûres et vivables

OBJECTIF

3

Les infrastructures et les services communautaires sont fiables, résilients, sûrs et sobres en carbone.

4

Les maisons et les bâtiments sont sûrs, résilients, écoénergétiques et sobres en carbone.



Les infrastructures et les chaînes d'approvisionnement sont fiables

OBJECTIF

5

Le corridor d'infrastructures et de chaînes d'approvisionnement permet une circulation fiable et de moins en moins polluante des personnes, des biens et des services.

6

Les réseaux électriques sont résilients, rentables et soutiennent les objectifs de réduction des émissions ainsi que le développement économique.



L'économie peut s'adapter et se développer

OBJECTIF

7

Le secteur privé s'adapte, innove, investit et se développe.

8

La main-d'œuvre possède les connaissances, les compétences et la capacité nécessaires pour répondre aux besoins d'un avenir à faibles émissions de carbone et adapté au changement climatique.

Introduction: A North transforming under pressure and by intention

A lot has changed since the GNWT released its first approach to energy and climate change in 2018. Across the Northwest Territories, people continue to see more signs of climate change in their daily lives. Weather is less predictable, the land is changing, permafrost is thawing, and floods, droughts, and wildfires are happening more often. Most residents have already lived through major climate change-related emergencies, including historic flooding in 2022 that was immediately followed by historic drought and wildfires in 2023. Together, lived experience and expanded research and monitoring have deepened our collective understanding of how climate change is affecting the NWT, and what it will require to effectively address its impacts in the years ahead.

In 2024, the GNWT committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, which will mean a fundamental restructuring of the NWT energy system. Meanwhile, critical public infrastructure, such as transportation networks, buildings, and energy systems, will be increasingly impacted by the effects of a changing climate and will need to adapt.

Our ageing energy infrastructure is particularly unprepared to deliver the reliable and affordable power needed in the decades to come, while attempting a transition to net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Increased energy self-reliance requires reducing dependence on fossil fuel imports. This is increasingly a matter of territorial and national security in the context of growing geopolitical interest in resources like critical minerals and in Arctic sovereignty. Addressing these challenges presents an opportunity to develop the transformative infrastructure that the NWT needs to lay the foundations of a lower-carbon future, while supporting investment, economic development, strong communities, and Arctic sovereignty.

Our best knowledge and modelling predict that climate change will continue to have a defining impact on the lives of Northerners, including how we travel on the land, practice our cultures, and live safely in our homes and communities. Governments, businesses, and individuals have also experienced the strain of absorbing the financial and emotional impacts of a rapidly changing climate.

A Strategy Informed by Engagement and Research

A Changing North builds on a foundation of extensive engagement with Indigenous and community governments, Indigenous organizations, and residents, as well as representatives from civil society, youth, federal agencies, and academia in 2023 and 2024.

This Strategy is also informed by research undertaken by the GNWT to better understand the impacts climate change will have on infrastructure and residents' life as well as key technology pathways to lower-carbon GHG emissions in the NWT. The reports *Modeling emissions reductions pathways in the Northwest Territories and the NWT Climate Change Risks and Opportunities Assessment* released in 2023 and 2024, are steppingstones for the Strategy.

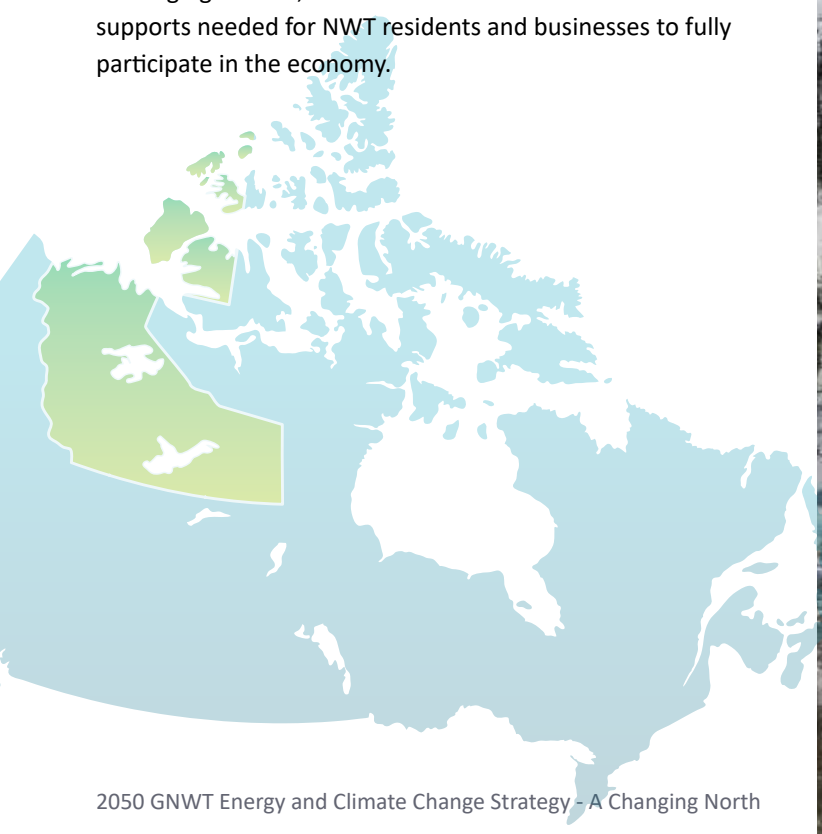
The Strategy replaces the *2030 Climate Change Strategic Framework and the 2030 Energy Strategy.* More details on engagement and research undertaken to inform the Strategy are included in Appendix 3.

So, what can we do about it?

This strategy brings all parts of this government together around clear energy and climate change-related priorities for the next 25 years and lays out what the Government of the Northwest Territories will work on to support a changing North.

The Strategy takes a risk-informed approach that focuses on what the GNWT is best positioned to influence. One government cannot do this work alone. Residents across the territory have told the GNWT they want better coordination, stronger partnerships, and more support for local solutions. The Strategy reflects those messages and aims to set a clear path forward for how the GNWT will focus its efforts across departments to enable planning and processes that protect the public from negative climate change related impacts, and to search out other funding, including federal funding where initiatives align. This strategy provides clarity about how the GNWT will focus its efforts, which will provide clarity to our partners, supporting meaningful collaboration.

Overall, this strategy lays out a path for how the territorial government can focus its resources to protect people, communities, critical infrastructure, and energy systems in a changing climate, in order to maintain the services and supports needed for NWT residents and businesses to fully participate in the economy.





A Strategy to Drive Change

The GNWT will implement a people-centered strategy built around enabling conditions that allow communities, economies, and governments to thrive in the face of climate change pressures and as we transition our energy system to a net zero future. The Strategy guides the actions of all GNWT departments and agencies on energy and climate change issues.

How the Strategy is Structured

The Strategy is structured around the following key elements:

- **The vision** sets the long-term direction for the duration of the Strategy;
- **The guiding principles** articulate the core values that guide how the GNWT will implement the Strategy and make decisions for the duration of the Strategy;
- **The goals** describe the broad aims the GNWT seeks to achieve over the duration of the Strategy;
- **The objectives** define the desired future state that the Strategy will influence; and
- **The indicators** translate objectives into measurable changes and provide a way to track progress over the duration of the Strategy. Indicators for each objective will be included in related implementation plans.

Vision

As the climate changes and the NWT transitions to a net zero energy future, people are safe and well, communities are livable, infrastructure and supply chains are dependable, and the economy can adapt and grow.



Guiding Principles

Implementation of the Strategy will consistently be guided by the following principles:

People-centered:



The overall wellness, safety, and quality of life of Northerners is central to guiding priorities and action.

Risk-informed, place-based, and evidence-based action:



Decisions will be grounded in the best available evidence, including science, Indigenous knowledge, technologies that are proven to be feasible and economically viable in the North, and lived experience of NWT residents. These will be used with place-based approaches to inform action undertaken to address the most significant risks to people, communities, infrastructure, the economy, and public services.

Affordability and cost of living:



Affordability and cost of living pressures are already significant for NWT residents, businesses, and the GNWT. These issues are expected to intensify, in part due to a changing climate. Decisions will consider impacts on household costs, essential services, businesses, and collective affordability, with a focus on avoiding unintended consequences and supporting fairness.

Meaningful involvement of Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations:



The GNWT recognizes Aboriginal and Treaty rights and remains committed to fulfilling its obligations under completed land, resources and self-government agreements. The GNWT is continuing to build the foundation for mutually respectful government-to-government relations and is committed to working collaboratively with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations.

Investing for long-term value:



Investments will consider long-term social, environmental, and economic value for the Northwest Territories. When feasible, decisions will consider lifecycle costs, long-term risk reduction, and the avoided costs of inaction, recognizing that early, strategic investments can reduce future burdens on people and public services.

Partnerships and alignment:



Meaningful progress depends on strong, respectful partnerships across governments, sectors and communities, including collaboration between the GNWT and Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, non-government organizations, industry, community governments, and the federal government. This involves partnering on specific projects as well as building alignment with relevant plans, policies, and investments to maximize impact and reduce duplication of effort. Funding partnerships, particularly federal partnerships, will be critical to the success of the Strategy since the GNWT does not have the financial resources to achieve its vision on its own.

Lead by example:



Leading innovation and change within GNWT operations, investments, and decision-making helps support new solutions and create the conditions for broader societal and economic transition.

Healthy ecosystems:



The health and wellbeing of people and communities are inseparable from the health of the natural world.

Goals and Objectives

The Strategy will be advanced through goals and objectives. Goals describe the broad aims the GNWT seeks to achieve over the duration of the Strategy. The objectives define the desired future state that the Strategy will influence.

1. Residents are supported to protect their physical and mental wellbeing

Objectives:

- Climate change-related health risks are tracked, assessed and integrated into decision-making.
- Communities and health services are better prepared for climate change-related health impacts.
- Mental wellbeing impacts related to climate change decrease.
- Physical health impacts from a changing climate decrease.

2. Residents can safely access the land and water for cultural, harvesting, and livelihood activities

Objectives:

- Safe continuation of land-based activities.
- Protection of culturally important sites.
- Traditional harvesting supports food security.
- Cultural practices and the transfer of Indigenous Knowledge are supported.

3. Community-based infrastructure and services are reliable, resilient, safe, and lower-carbon

Objectives:

- Reliable and resilient community-based infrastructure and services minimize climate change-related disruptions.
- Community-based infrastructure, including energy and transportation systems, are increasingly lower-carbon, and are cost-effective on a lifecycle basis.
- Community-level planning, decision making, and implementation capacity are improved.
- High likelihood and consequence climate change-related risks within and to communities are identified, prioritized, and proactively managed.
- Lessons from past emergencies and events inform planning and preparation, reducing future significant climate-change-related risks and impacts.
- Climate change-related emergencies and events are met with adaptive, coordinated actions across the GNWT and partners.

4. Homes and buildings are safe, resilient, energy efficient, and lower-carbon

Objectives:

- Homes and buildings show a sustained decline in energy use and emissions intensity, while remaining cost-effective.
- Homes and buildings are resilient to the effects of climate change, with residents experiencing a healthy indoor environment year-round.



5. Corridor infrastructure and supply chains provide dependable and increasingly lower-carbon movement of people, goods and services

Objectives:

- Predictable transportation networks support reliable supply chains that experience fewer significant disruptions as a result of better understanding and mitigation of climate change-related risks.
- Energy and communications infrastructure experience fewer significant climate change-related disruptions.
- GHG emission intensity from supply chains and the transportation sector declines.
- Essential goods and services continue to be available in NWT communities at stable costs during climate change-related emergencies and events.

6. Electricity systems are resilient, cost-effective, and support emissions reduction targets and economic development

Objectives:

- Increased electricity generation is supported by low-carbon sources to meet emissions reduction targets and advance economic development.
- Modernization of electricity systems allows for reliable and flexible grids that are resilient to the impacts of a changing climate, accommodate increased levels of renewable energy, and support electrification of end-uses.
- Electricity rates are predictable for residents and the private sector.
- New electricity generation capacity meets local needs, including supporting Indigenous and community governments' interests.

7. The private sector adapts, innovates, invests and grows

Objectives:

- Industrial activity and investment in industrial projects grow while aligning over time with territorial GHG emissions reduction targets.
- Commercial activity and investments in the NWT support sustainable economic growth and expand opportunities in tourism, manufacturing, renewable energy and sustainable resource development, and the territory's emerging research and innovation economy.
- More businesses integrate climate change risk management, adaptation and GHG reduction practices into their planning and operations and are better able to withstand climate change-related impacts.
- The private sector supports or participates in responses to climate change related emergencies.
- NWT food production and manufacturing grow and support food security.

8. The workforce has the knowledge, skills and capability to meet the needs of a lower-carbon, climate change adapted future

Objectives:

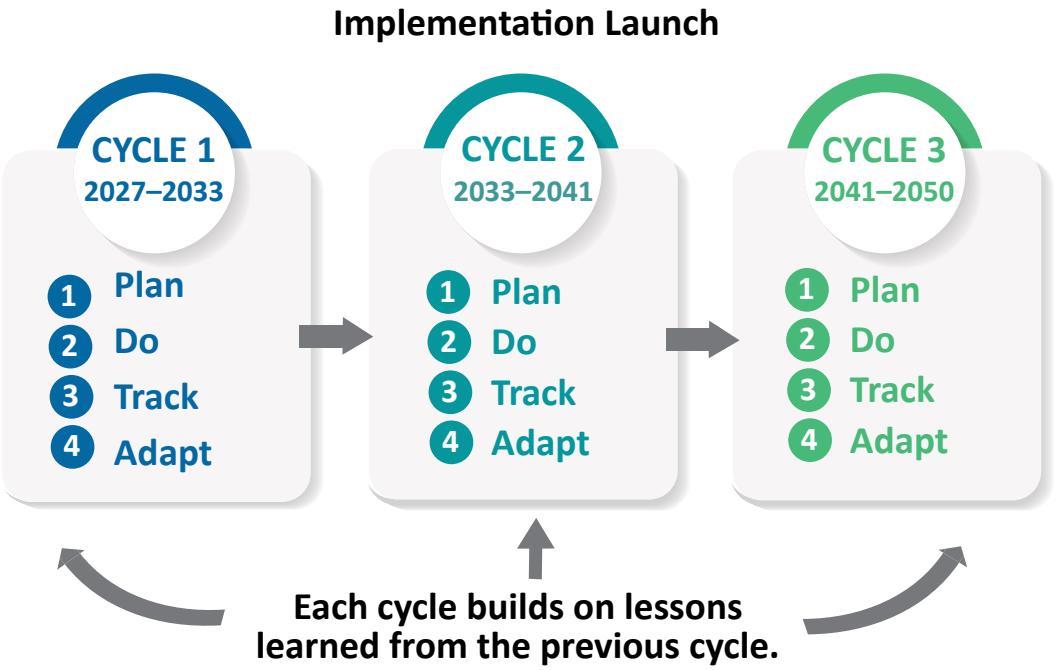
- Employment grows in sectors that strengthen climate resiliency, support the shift to a lower-carbon future, and benefit from the economically favorable impacts of a changing climate.
- The NWT workforce is supported in accessing knowledge, skills and training required to succeed in a lower carbon economy, including targeted training and skills development programs.

How the GNWT Will Implement This Strategy

All GNWT departments and some key agencies (e.g. NWT Power Corporation, Housing NWT) were involved in the development of this strategy. Implementing the Strategy will similarly involve all GNWT departments and agencies. Progressing towards the vision and goals of the Strategy will require clear roles and responsibilities, transparent reporting, measurable targets, regular monitoring, and collaboration within the GNWT and partners. It will also require a flexible and adaptive approach to adjust to new and emerging circumstances over the Strategy's 25-year life.

Implementation cycles

This strategy will be implemented in three cycles, guided by coordination and accountability structures. Each implementation cycle includes four iterative phases: 1) Planning and prioritization, 2) Execution, 3) Monitoring, tracking, and reporting, and 4) Evaluation and adaptation. These phases are expected to overlap to ensure actions are effective and aligned with objectives and priorities, as described in the following diagram. The first cycle will run from April 2027 to March 2033, the second from April 2033 to March 2041, and the third from April 2041 to March 2050. This approach will allow for the Strategy to be adaptive and respond to continuous learning and new information, emerging risks, and changing priorities over time.



1 - Planning and prioritization

An Implementation Plan ("the Plan") will be developed and released at the start of each cycle to clarify priorities, identify responsibilities across departments and agencies. The Plan will clarify strategies, roadmaps, business plans, or capital plans that will be leveraged to advance the priorities over the period. Key indicators will be defined in the first cycle to track progress on the objectives over the duration of the Strategy.

Nine initial priorities have been identified to guide implementation during the first implementation cycle, signalling where and how the GNWT will be focusing efforts and resources to progress towards the stated goals and objectives. These are outlined in the following section. An initial list of the departments supporting the next step of planning on priorities for the first implementation cycle can be found in Appendix 1.

A NET-ZERO ROADMAP

Energy activities identified in the Strategy will be advanced through a Net-Zero Roadmap (roadmap). The roadmap supports several of the Strategy's goals by guiding the NWT's energy transition in a way that ensures residents and businesses have access to reliable, affordable energy while reducing GHG emissions in line with the territory's net-zero target. The roadmap will be aligned and coordinated with the Strategy through coordination and accountability structures, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.

2 - Execution

Implementing this strategy with a whole-of-government approach requires clear roles and responsibilities across the GNWT. These structures will inform and evolve activities and roles, align departmental efforts, and inform and support a consistent approach for decision making, tracking, reporting, and performance monitoring. This will also include how the GNWT engages and partners with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, community governments, and others to strengthen coordination, streamline processes, and ensure that engagement approaches are efficient, effective, and aligned with advancing shared priorities. The Strategy's governance approach will be reviewed periodically and adjusted to reflect evolving needs.

The GNWT will establish coordination and accountability structures as part of the Strategy's governance framework during the first implementation cycle.

MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

The indicators introduced in the first Implementation Plan will track progress toward the long-term goals of the 2050 Energy and Climate Change Strategy. They will provide consistent, reliable evidence to show what is working, where improvements are needed, and how we are advancing over time.

By using core indicators across all three implementation cycles, the Strategy will support strong decision-making and transparency. This consistency will help ensure accountability, even as priorities, funding, and political contexts evolve.

3 - Monitoring, tracking and reporting

Monitoring, tracking, and reporting processes will provide clear, consistent insight into how the Strategy's priorities are progressing, and movement towards objectives. Updates on activities supporting the priorities of the current cycle will be shared with the public on a regular basis. Key indicators will also measure progress against the Strategy's objectives, and help ensure transparency, support informed decision-making, and build confidence that implementation is advancing as intended.

A structured approach that regularly documents progress, identifies challenges, and communicates results using tools such as indicators and reporting mechanisms will be outlined in the implementation plan for the first cycle.

4 - Evaluation and adaptation

The GNWT is committed to evaluating the effectiveness of the Strategy at the end of each implementation cycle. This evaluation will assess progress toward objectives, identify what is working well, and highlight where adjustments are needed. Findings from the evaluation will inform a review of priorities for the next cycle and offer insights to update the governance approach, ensuring that the Strategy remains responsive, evidence-based, and aligned with emerging needs and opportunities.

Evaluation approach and timing will be confirmed in the implementation plan for the first cycle based on, and aligned with, emerging needs and opportunities.

Initial Priorities

Nine priorities have been identified to guide implementation during the first implementation cycle. These priorities will form the backbone of the Implementation Plan for the first cycle by signaling where and how the GNWT will be focusing efforts and resources to progress towards the stated goals and objectives. Priorities will be reviewed and updated at the end of a cycle to reflect progress made and evolving context.

1. We will improve our understanding of climate change related risks and focus on addressing the most likely and consequential risks. This includes:

- Focusing monitoring and research to better understand, assess, communicate, and address climate change related risks.
- Working with all partners to foster and coordinate climate change risk planning and data collection, management, analysis and sharing.
- Integrating Indigenous knowledge and local observations into planning and decision-making.
- Enabling adaptation measures that reduce risks to critical infrastructure and communities.
- Using codes, standards, training, planning, and regulatory tools to promote best practices and reduce risk.

2. We will modernize our energy systems and reduce emissions in ways that are cost-effective and practical within our northern conditions and communities, promoting investment and economic development. This includes:

- Advancing a modernized electricity system that is flexible, able to support electrification of end-uses and integrate more renewable energy.
- Developing NWT energy potential to reduce energy imports, increasing energy self-reliance for the territory.
- Supporting the availability of cost-effective, lower-carbon fuels and technologies.
- Using codes, standards, carbon policy tools, and regulatory tools to promote energy transition.

3. We will support community-level planning, solution-finding and implementation capacity. This includes:

- Supporting communities to access decision-enabling climate and hazard information.
- Working with community governments and local service providers to strengthen planning, service delivery, and operational capacity.
- Reducing barriers and increasing supports for regional and local energy solutions that are cost effective and lower carbon where possible.
- Supporting local food production and harvesting to advance food security.

4. We will work to keep homes and buildings safe, resilient, and cost-effective as northern conditions change. This includes:

- Using codes, standards, and regulatory tools to promote long-term climate resilience, energy performance, and GHG emissions reductions.
- Supporting energy efficiency, fuel switching measures and technologies that reduce energy costs and/or GHG emissions.



5. We will protect and strengthen the territorial infrastructure that provides residents and businesses access to the transportation routes, services, and the supply chains they depend on. This includes:

- Using codes, standards, and regulatory tools to promote climate resilience and energy transition.
- Planning for redundancy, local capacity, and coordination to ensure essential services and goods —such as water, food, transportation, energy, and communications—remain reliable and cost-effective as conditions change.
- Building and sustaining infrastructure and supply chains guided by lifecycle costing, asset management best practices, risk-reduction principles, and lower-carbon solutions where practical.

6. We will support private sector adaptation, innovation, and lower-carbon growth.

This includes:

- Pursuing energy and infrastructure projects that support lower-carbon industrial growth.
- Helping businesses anticipate and manage climate change risks and impacts.
- Aligning skills training, carbon policy tools, investment, and partnerships to support competitiveness and resilience.

7. We will continue to provide support for planning, for adaptation to and mitigation against climate change-related emergency risks. This includes:

- Recognizing and respecting that many impacts and decisions about emergency planning and preparedness are the responsibility of community governments.
- Working across government and with community governments and local partners to identify climate change related emergency risks.
- Applying what we learn to improve community planning, mitigation and adaptation to minimize risks from climate-change-driven emergencies to reduce vulnerabilities and improve outcomes over time.

8. We will support safe and continued access to the land for culture, harvesting, and livelihoods. This includes:

- Empowering residents with information, tools, and supports informed by Indigenous knowledge, local observation and scientific data.
- Supporting guardian programs and advancing Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.
- Working with Indigenous partners to identify and mitigate impacts of climate change on culturally important sites.
- Supporting traditional food harvesting to increase food security.

9. We will improve our understanding and ability to respond to the potential impacts of climate change on human health and wellbeing. This includes:

- Defining, monitoring, and communicating health risks linked to climate change.
- Providing information to help residents protect their physical and mental health.
- Helping communities and health service providers to respond to climate change-related health challenges.

Appendix 1 - List of Acronyms

ECC	Department of Environment and Climate Change
ECE	Department of Education, Culture and Employment
EIA	Executive and Indigenous Affairs
FIN	Department of Finance
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
HNWT	Housing NWT
HSS	Department of Health and Social Services
INF	Department of Infrastructure
ITI	Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment
MACA	Department of Municipal and Community Affairs
NTPC	Northwest Territories Power Corporation
NWT	Northwest Territories
SIESC	Department responsible for Strategic Infrastructure, Energy and Supply Chains

Appendix 2 - Glossary

Definitions of key terms and concepts included in the Strategy:

Affordable

Costs are reasonable, balanced, and manageable for residents, businesses, organizations, and all levels of government, considering up front expenses and subsidies as well as long-term financial, social, and environmental impacts.

Climate change

Long-term shifts in average temperatures and broader weather and environmental conditions. While climate has changed naturally in the past, the science is clear that 21st Century climate change is mainly caused by human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels, which emits greenhouse gases (GHG). The current pace of global warming is significant: we're seeing changes over a few decades that would otherwise have happened over thousands of years, affecting infrastructure, economies, and daily life, and leaving no time for ecosystems to adapt.

Climate Change Risks

The potential negative effects of climate change on various aspects of the environment, infrastructure, and people, such as thawing permafrost damaging roads or the way ice freezes on a body of water making traditional routes unsafe.

Climate change-related emergency

In the GNWT context, the term "emergency" has specific legal meaning and operational implications. It refers to situations that meet the threshold for coordinated emergency management under territorial law, as defined in the NWT Emergency Management Act. A climate-change-related emergency is an emergency that is caused or worsened by a climate hazard, such as wildfire, extreme heat, flooding.

Climate-change-related events/disruptions

Used to describe events or disruptions that interrupt the daily lives of NWT residents or businesses and are caused or worsened by a climate hazard. "Emergencies", as defined in the *NWT Emergency Management Act*, are excluded from this definition.

Climate hazards

Physical weather or climate-related conditions, trends, or events (such as extreme heat, wildfire, or storm) that has the potential to produce harmful impacts on people, infrastructure, or ecosystems.

Climate-change-related hazards

Climate hazards that have been caused or altered in their nature or severity by long-term, human-driven changes to the climate and pose greater or different risks than they would have under historical climate conditions.

Corridors

Refer to linear routes or areas used to locate and connect major infrastructure providing services such as transportation (e.g. roads, rail), energy (e.g. transmission lines, pipelines), or communication (e.g. optical fibre cables).

Culturally important sites

Archaeological sites, burial sites, and other places of cultural significance to Northerners.

Essential goods and services

This typically includes food, drinking water, fuel, medical supplies, communication within the community and with the outside world, as well as other items required to maintain core services and meet immediate or critical community needs.

Greenhouse gases

Gases, such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases, that when released into the Earth's atmosphere can create a 'greenhouse effect', in which heat becomes trapped and global temperatures rise. Greenhouse gases released from human activities (such as the combustion of fossil fuels) are the main contributors to climate change.

Hazard vs. Risk

A hazard is the potential source of harm (what could happen). A risk results when a hazard interacts with exposure and vulnerability (the chance of harmful consequences occurring because of a hazard).

Life-cycle costing

Considers all the costs that will be incurred during the lifetime of the product, project or service. For example, for a building, it would include things such as the cost to acquire and prepare the land, construct the building, provide power and water, maintain and heat the building over its entire lifespan, and decommission and demolish the building as well as reclaim the land when the building has reached its end of life.

Livable communities

Support a good quality of life, sustainability, and safety for residents. Within the scope of this strategy, that means transitioning to sustainable, reliable infrastructure, including energy infrastructure, and enhancing resilience to the impacts of a changing climate, while making deliberate choices so that the changes do not negatively impact affordability, safety, and equity for vulnerable populations.

Lower carbon

Refers to a fuel or a technology resulting in fewer greenhouse gas emissions than typical alternatives.

Modernized electricity systems

Combine appropriate power generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure with updated technology to support the electricity grids so that they can allow increased penetration of renewable energy sources and electrification of end-uses (e.g. heating, transportation) while becoming more reliable, resilient, secure, and lower carbon.

Modernized energy systems

Heating, transportation, and electricity generation systems that are more reliable, resilient, secure, and lower carbon than are standard in the NWT in 2025. Modernized energy systems includes modernized electricity systems as well as approaches to making lower-carbon energy supply chains (e.g. biomass, biofuels) more secure and reliable.

Net-zero emissions

Means balancing greenhouse gas emissions with carbon removal measures. It is usually planned to be achieved by drastically reducing GHG emissions and offsetting residual emissions through carbon offsets purchase or projects (occurring in Canada) such as tree planting (via established and recognized protocols) or employing technologies that can capture carbon from the air (e.g. Direct Air Capture).

Predictable costs

Refers to reliably forecasted costs, following a consistent pattern over a set period, allowing households, businesses and other organizations to budget accordingly.

Resilient

Refers to the capacity to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and recover from the rapid, compounding impacts of climate change and the energy transition; resilience is not just recovering to a previous state, but moving forward to a safer, self-reliant, and sustainable state.

Supply chains

The systems, services, and infrastructure networks required to transport, store, and deliver goods, materials, equipment, and services into, within, and out of the NWT. In this strategy, supply chains include the public and private operations that support this movement (such as Marine Transportation Services, fuel delivery, and freight delivery) as well as the infrastructure these activities rely on.

Sustainable

The ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level over time. It means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Appendix 3 – Moving initial priorities into implementation

As this is a whole-of-government GNWT strategy, responsibilities fall to multiple departments. This list identifies departments who will be involved in the next steps of implementation planning:

Priority	Departments Involved										
	ECC	ECE	EIA	FIN	HNWT	HSS	INF	ITI	MACA	NTPC	SIESC
1. We will improve our understanding of climate risks and focus on addressing the most likely and consequential risks.	■				■	■	■	■	■		■
2. We will modernize our energy systems and reduce emissions in ways that are cost-effective and practical within our northern conditions and communities, promoting investments and economic development.	■		■	■			■	■	■	■	■
3. We will support community-level planning, solution-finding and implementation capacity.	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
4. We will work to keep homes and buildings safe, resilient, and cost-effective as northern conditions change.	■				■	■	■	■	■	■	■
5. We will protect and strengthen the territorial infrastructure that provides residents and businesses access to the transportation routes, services, and the supply chains they depend on.							■	■	■	■	■
6. We will support private sector adaptation, innovation and lower-carbon growth.	■	■					■	■		■	■
7. We will continue to provide support for planning, for adaptation to and mitigation against climate change-related emergency risks.	■		■		■	■		■	■	■	■
8. We will support safe and continued access to the land for culture, harvesting and livelihoods.	■	■	■			■		■			
9. We will improve our understanding and ability to respond to the potential impacts of climate change on human health and wellbeing.	■					■					

Appendix 4 – How the Strategy was developed

A Strategy informed by engagement

This new, whole-of-government climate change and energy strategy replaces the existing 2030 Climate Change Strategic Framework and 2030 Energy Strategy and incorporates the GNWT's 2050 net zero greenhouse gas emissions commitment made in Fall 2024. In recent years the GNWT has conducted extensive engagement on climate change and energy inside and outside the GNWT, including with Indigenous organizations and governments, and residents. This feedback was instrumental in developing the new Strategy. Key resources used were:

- The What We Heard report: 2025-2029 Draft Climate Change Action Plan (2025)
- The Draft 2025-2029 Climate Change Action Plan (2024);
- 2024 Climate Change Risks and Opportunities Assessment (2024);
- Our Energy and Climate Future in a Changing World (2024, What We Heard - public engagement during review of 2030 Energy Strategy and climate change targets).

Public & stakeholder engagement on energy & climate change issues in the NWT

Engagement feedback gathered throughout this time is summarized in three reports:

Our Energy and Climate Future in a Changing World - What We Heard - Public Engagement on the Review of the 2030 Energy Strategy and Climate Change Targets (March 2024)

Participants included the NWT Climate Change Council (which includes representatives from 12 Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, the NWT Association of Communities, and GNWT departments), additional members of Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, environmental non-governmental organizations, the NWT Climate Change Youth Council, federal agencies, electricity utility companies, the NWT business community, academia, and the public. This engagement took place between June and October 2023.

Feedback focused on 5 broad ideas:

- **Increase the emissions reduction target for the NWT:** The NWT should raise its level of climate effort and possibly adjust its 2030 emissions reduction target and/or set a longer-term emissions reduction target to guide its efforts beyond 2030.
- **Revised roles and responsibilities:** Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations want to be more involved in making decisions on energy and climate change, especially when it comes to setting emission reduction targets. A renewed Energy Strategy should articulate clear roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in the energy transition.
- **Economy and affordability are key:** The energy transition will greatly impact the economy, jobs, and cost-of-living in the NWT. The GNWT needs a realistic plan to deploy clean energy infrastructure that will shield Northerners from increases in energy costs. The availability of federal funding will be key to achieving this.
- **Utilities will play a key role:** The utility regulator, electric utilities, the GNWT, and interested Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations should work together to develop appropriate planning, regulatory, and policy tools to enable the transition of the NWT electricity system over the coming decades.
- **Leverage known, proven technologies:** Most of the technological solutions to decarbonize NWT energy systems are well known to Northerners (e.g. solar, wind, hydropower, biomass), and increased deployment would be dependent on factors such as local capacity, affordability, and energy security. Emerging technological options, such as small modular nuclear reactors, liquid biofuels or hydrogen, could possibly be added to the mix in future, after the technologies become commercially available and have been properly tested for use in northern applications.

Shared Resilience to a Changing Climate - NWT Climate Change Risks and Opportunities Assessment (October 2024)

The NWT Climate Change Risks and Opportunities Assessment was developed through a two-year engagement process involving residents and partners across the Northwest Territories. Participants included NWT residents of various age groups and backgrounds, representatives from Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, community governments, the federal government, co-management boards, industry, academia, non-governmental organizations, the NWT Climate Change Council and the NWT Climate Change Youth Council. Guidance and feedback were also provided by contracted technical support teams and the NWT Climate Change Council throughout the assessment.

The assessment identifies the most pressing climate change risks and shared values: ecosystems, health and well-being, connection to land and culture, infrastructure and services, and the economy. It highlights a set of key climate hazards and vulnerabilities and outlines "made-in-the-NWT" adaptation pathways that could guide coordinated action and collaboration across governments and stakeholders over the next decade.

Key climate change hazard categories are:

- River erosion
- Climate and weather changes
- Permafrost thaw
- Coastal changes
- Vegetation and wildlife changes
- Wildfires, and
- Fresh water changes.

The most concerning climate change risks highlighted are:

- Risks to ecosystems (Land, Water and Wildlife)
- Risks to health and well-being
- Risks to connection to the land and culture
- Risks to infrastructure and access to essential services, and
- Risks to business and economy.

2025-2029 Draft Climate Change Action Plan – What We Heard (August 2025)

A draft 2025–2029 NWT Climate Change Action Plan was developed by ECC and informed by previous engagements and the NWT Climate Change Council. Additional engagement took place between October 2024 and January 2025, including an in-person Climate Change Advisory Group Gathering held in October 2024, which was attended by 128 participants representing Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, community governments, non-governmental organizations, youth, academia, the federal government, and members of the public.

Key themes that emerged from this engagement include:

- **Urgency:** Northerners want more decisive and immediate climate action.
- **Accountability:** Respondents called for clearer roles, timelines, & mechanisms to track progress.
- **Clarity:** Respondents emphasized the need for clear, concise language and improved communication.
- **Coordination:** There were strong calls for a whole-of-government approach and deeper collaboration with Indigenous governments.

External advice

Modeling emissions reductions pathways in the Northwest Territories (May 2023)

The Modeling Emissions Reductions Pathways in the Northwest Territories report was prepared by Navius Research Inc. for the GNWT Department of Infrastructure to inform the review of territorial energy and climate change strategies. The analysis was technical in nature and did not involve broad public-facing engagement; rather, it incorporated expert modelling and was used as a key input in GNWT discussions and stakeholder engagement on energy and climate policy options during the 2023–2024 review of the 2030 Energy Strategy and Climate Change Strategic Framework.

The report quantifies the gap between current policy projections and NWT emissions reduction targets, showing that the territory is on track to meet its 2030 target under existing policy but would require additional efforts to align with more ambitious federal targets, such as achieving net zero emissions by 2050. It highlights cost-effective technology and fuel pathways, including biomass heating, electrification, expanded renewable electricity with storage, and biofuels, that could contribute to deeper emissions reductions. It also underscores the need for stronger policy actions to close the net-zero gap.

Key findings of the modelling were used to inform the 2023 engagement on the review of the 2030 Energy Strategy and NWT climate change targets.

Independent Evaluation of the Climate Change Strategic Framework (August 2024)

The consulting firm DPRA Canada was contracted to undertake an independent evaluation of the 2030 Climate Change Strategic Framework and 2019-2023 Climate Change Action Plan. A formal review of the Framework and this Action Plan was conducted to assess the progress made towards their respective Vision and Goals.

The evaluator conducted a background document review, interviews, and held focus group discussions with 39 participants including representatives from the GNWT, federal government, Indigenous governments, members of the NWT Climate Change Council, non-government agencies, land and water boards, and industry.

The evaluation highlighted that having a separate Climate Change Strategic Framework, Energy Action Plan, and Carbon Tax:

"…leads to a 'really disjointed way of dealing with climate change' that results in ineffective and inefficient management of actions. As a result, activities are often siloed, departments end up "stepping on other departments' toes," and some GNWT departments are left "spinning their wheels." For example, while INF is responsible for leading and administering the Energy Strategy, ECC has non-energy-related responsibilities that directly and indirectly support GHG reductions identified in the Framework (e.g., landscape-based emissions).

"This overlap has proven difficult given both departments are trying to move forward their strategy and action plan and that requires a coordinated approach. There were also challenges with the two departments working together because of their different organizational cultures."

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Dene Kədǝ́

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Tłı̨chǫ yatı k’ę̀è. Dı wegodı newǫ dè, gots’o gonede.
Tłı̨chǫ

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