

YES - to the Nova Scotia Coastal Protection Act

The Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS) is extremely disappointed in this week's announcement that the provincial government will not be passing the Coastal Protection Act and urges a reconsideration on this important policy matter.

The years of effort on this proposed Legislation by numerous stakeholders, the all-party support in 2019, and the pressing issue around coastal degradation of late, make this decision almost incomprehensible. As governments tout the perilous issue of climate change; this new direction is incongruent with good policy development around coastal protection.

TIANS has been an active proponent of the need to establish protections for the NS coast for a multitude of reasons, including ensuring our greatest asset has the appropriate protection and guidelines to shape development and growth in the coming years.

As an ocean inspired destination with 13,300 kilometers of coastline, we have a shared obligation to have a regulatory framework that will serve the province's interests. Only 5% of Nova Scotia's coastline is publicly protected, the Environment Minister's public statement referring to 13.1%, is the current amount of land under the total Protected Areas Network, which the coastline is part of.

To suggest this be downloaded to municipalities, with an incoherent approach around development and protection; is an abdication of governance responsibility on this issue. It is difficult to think of a more important piece of legislation for NS, as it relates to the environment today. A provincial approach would provide the right structure and guidance for municipalities, coastal communities and the majority of Nova Scotia residents.

Coincidentally, over the last number of months TIANS has been working with Tourism Nova Scotia on a new Tourism Growth Strategy. Community outreach with hundreds of tourism and community members highlighted the value of our coast and natural assets, and reaffirmed the link between strong environmental policy and our brand as a preferred tourism destination.

We urge the Premier to reconsider and enact the Coastal Protection Act for Nova Scotia. A reversal on this decision needs to take place - a majority of Nova Scotian's want this; municipal governments want this; the environment needs this. Why is government not listening?