

The CEDAR Project
Sustainability & Environmental Studies
St. Thomas University
Fredericton, New Brunswick
Canada E3B 5G3

<https://cedar-project.org>
info@cedar-project.org

Positioning NB Power for the Climate-Challenged 21st Century

CEDAR Project Submission to the NB Power Review

By email: NBPReview-ExamenENB@gnb.ca

November 14, 2025

Contributing Authors:

Dr. Janice Harvey, St. Thomas University
Dr. Susan O'Donnell, St. Thomas University
Dr. Andrew Secord, St. Thomas University
Dr. Jean-Philippe Sapinski, Université de Moncton
Dr. M.V. Ramana, University of British Columbia

Introduction

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute the expertise of the CEDAR Research Team to the NB Power Review. Our research home is the Sustainability and Environmental Studies program at St. Thomas University. Our work analyses the ongoing energy transition and the climate crisis in New Brunswick and advocates for an affordable, sustainable energy system for the province.

The CEDAR Team consists of faculty members and students at St. Thomas University, Université de Moncton, and University of British Columbia. Our researchers, along with Indigenous and community partners, have knowledge related to conventional and renewable energy systems, utilities, economics, public policy, and implications of energy systems for ecosystems and climate change.

I. Key Messages

- The energy system - climate system connection is missing.
- There is a strong case against nuclear power as a climate-friendly supply option.
- Investing in new fossil fuel infrastructure is "moral and economic madness."
- Global energy systems are transitioning to renewable energy and NB Power needs to do the same.
- Renewable energy investments are already signalling the way forward in New Brunswick.
- Customers expect a public electrical utility they can trust; they are getting the opposite.
- NB Power is frozen in the past. The utility needs a fundamental change of direction.

II. What's Missing: The Energy System-Climate System Connection

Any review of NB Power's future must be undertaken with climate change as the envelope within which all decisions are made, not least because Canada – and NB Power – have legal obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.¹ A related reason is that the federal government is doubling down on industrial carbon pricing as its benchmark climate change policy, committing to strengthening it over time. For NB Power, this means ever-increasing costs related to carbon emissions.²

These political decisions are not performative. They are grounded in the material reality of climate change that is confronting nations, provinces, communities and families. Without an all-in commitment to emissions reductions across all sectors and jurisdictions, and at NB Power a concerted effort to build resilience and redundancy into the grid, the costs of climate change will undermine the economy of New Brunswick, let alone any attempt at achieving financial viability at NB Power.

Canadians are already dealing with the severe effects of global heating. According to the [Canadian Climate Institute](#), “Ongoing scientific research continues to clarify the links between human-caused climate change and the intensification of storms.... Storm hazards—such as strong winds, hail, and lightning—pose serious risks to infrastructure, agriculture, and communities and are a major driver of catastrophic losses in Canada.”³ The Institute's 2022 report, [Damage Control: Reducing the Costs of Climate Change in Canada](#), found that:

Climate damages are already resulting in large national income losses over the very short term. In 2025, Canada will experience \$25 billion in losses relative to a stable-climate scenario, which is equal to 50 per cent of projected 2025 GDP growth. The mounting costs compound quickly over the years and decades ahead, rising to \$78 and \$101 billion annually by mid-century for a low and high emissions scenario respectively, and \$391 and \$865 billion respectively by end of century.⁴

While there are no specific numbers on the overall cost to New Brunswick, NB Power is acutely aware of the mounting bill. A 2019 brochure prepared by the utility states: “Not unlike our

¹ Government of Canada: [Canada's 2035 Nationally Determined Contribution](#); [Canadian Net-Zero Accountability Act 2023](#); [Canada's Clean Electricity Regulations 2024](#).

² Government of Canada. (Nov. 9, 2025). [Canada's new climate competitiveness strategy](#).

³ Canadian Climate Institute (April 2025). FACT SHEET Climate Change and Storms. <https://climateinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Fact-Sheet-Climate-Change-and-Storms.pdf>

⁴ Canadian Climate Institute (September 2022). Damage Control: Reducing the Costs of Climate Impacts in Canada. <https://climateinstitute.ca/reports/damage-control/>

neighbours in Canada and the United States, New Brunswick is feeling the effects of climate change. It is expected to have further impacts on this province in the future.”

Hurricanes, ice storms, and two of the worst floods in the past 50 years are some of the extreme weather events that New Brunswick has faced in the past five years.... Severe weather events in New Brunswick are creating greater obstacles for power restoration. While the frequency of weather events has not increased significantly, the severity and duration of events are impacting service for New Brunswickers.... As reported by the Department of Natural Resources, extreme weather events will become more frequent, with hurricanes and storms being the greatest contributors in our province.⁵

This directly affects ratepayers, not only in power outages but also in their power bills. In 2018, NB Power requested permission from the Energy and Utilities Board to add a surcharge to customers’ bills to offset the costs of severe weather events.⁶ This was not granted. In its 2019 submission to the Energy and Utilities Board (EUB), NB Power revealed that the cost of storms over the previous six years approached \$100 million. This was cited as a contributing factor to their rate hike increase that year. Their EUB submission indicated that because of changing weather patterns, the utility could no longer budget for storm damages based on historical 30-year averages, requesting instead to use shorter five-year averages. For instance, in 2018, the utility budgeted \$2.7 million for storm repairs based on historical averages but spent nearly six times that amount. The request was for a six-times increase to \$16.8 million.⁷

The costs of climate change to NB Power continue. A December 2023 storm was reported to be one of the utility’s largest restoration challenges to date.

NB Power CEO Lori Clark said at a Fredericton press conference on Friday, Dec. 15, that huge weather events such as hurricanes that cause widespread electrical outages can wipe out profits in any given year. Only three days later, during the night of Monday, Dec. 18, a windstorm with violent gusts and torrents of rain knocked out power to 129,000 homes and businesses in central and southwestern New Brunswick, more than one in four of NB Power’s customers....NB Power still doesn’t have an estimate, but it’s clear the costs will be in the multi-millions. “This storm was one of the most intense wind events our province has seen, and the damage encountered by our restoration team included broken poles, impacted infrastructure and downed lines, in addition to vegetation impacts,” spokeswoman Dominique Couture told Brunswick News in an

⁵ NB Power (undated). https://www.nbpower.com/media/1489807/191220-extreme-weather-report_final-en.pdf

⁶ CTV Atlantic (March 19, 2018). NB Power proposes new tax to combat extreme weather events. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/atlantic/article/nb-power-proposes-new-tax-to-combat-extreme-weather-events/>

⁷ Jones, R. (Apr 4, 2019). NB Power emerges as climate-change doomsayer after years of costly storm damage. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/nb-power-climate-change-storm-damage-costs-1.5083870>

email. “While it is too early to provide information on costs, this restoration effort has become one of the largest in our company’s history.”⁸

As we write this, several significant events are unfolding that underscore the global threat to which we must all focus our attention. [Jamaica, Haiti, Bahamas, Viet Nam and the Philippines](#) have been devastated by tropical storms of unprecedented intensity of rain and wind speed. Climate scientists are clear that these and other storms are amped up by equally unprecedented ocean temperatures caused by global heating.^{9 10 11 12} The human misery and community devastation these events impose aside, the economic costs are staggering. Experts estimate the total damage and economic loss across the Caribbean from Hurricane Melissa alone at \$48 billion to \$52 billion.¹³ Total costs of climate disasters are expected to reach [\\$145 billion in 2025](#).¹⁴

Research by the [Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research](#) indicates that global economic output in the middle of this century could decrease by 17 percent with present levels of heating. They estimate that global economic costs of changes in rainfall and heat waves within a range of 19-59 trillion dollars in 2050, not including other weather extremes such as storms or wildfires.¹⁵

⁸ Chilibeck, J. (Jan 20, 2024). NB Power's bottom line takes a hit from December windstorm cleanup. The Daily Gleaner. <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/nb-powers-bottom-line-takes-a-hit-from-december-windstorm-cleanup-100930580>

⁹ Clarke, B. et al., (2025): Climate change enhanced intensity of Hurricane Melissa, testing limits of adaptation in Jamaica and eastern Cuba (WWA scientific report No. 76) World Weather Attribution DOI: 10.25560/125306

¹⁰ Garner, A.J., Samanta, D., Weaver, M.M. et al. (2024). Changes to tropical cyclone trajectories in Southeast Asia under a warming climate. *npj Clim Atmos Sci* **7**, 156. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41612-024-00707-0>

¹¹ Gilford, D. et al (2024). Human-caused ocean warming has intensified recent hurricanes. *Environ. Res.: Climate* **3** 045019.

¹² Sparks, N., & Toumi, R. (2025). Climate change attribution of Typhoon Haiyan with the Imperial College Storm Model. *Atmospheric Science Letters*, 26(1), e1285. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asl.1285>

¹³ AccuWeather. Latest Update: Historic hurricane landfall caused \$48 billion to \$52 billion in damage across the Caribbean; full recovery could take a decade or longer. Updated 31 Oct, 2025 7:26 AM AST. <https://www.accuweather.com/en/press/latest-update-melissa-now-making-catastrophic-landfall-in-jamaica-cuba-and-bahamas-on-alert-for-destructive-impacts/1827344>

¹⁴ Crowfoot, T. (May 7, 2025 · Updated Jun 3, 2025). Costs for climate disasters to reach \$145 billion in 2025. <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/05/costs-climate-disasters-145-billion-nature-climate-news>. World Economic Forum.

¹⁵ Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. Nature study on economic damages from climate change revised (August 2025). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15984134>.

Similarly, a study by the [Institute and Faculty of Actuaries](#) found ‘the global economy could face a 50% loss in GDP between 2070 and 2090, unless immediate policy action on risks posed by the climate crisis is taken.’¹⁶ These costs are about five times higher than the abatement costs associated with limiting global warming to 2°C.

GDP costs are relative to degrees of warming. A study by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), reported by the [World Economic Forum](#), found that ‘a permanent 1°C rise in global temperature lowers world GDP by over 20%.’ [Climate change of 2°C by 2100 leads to a present-value welfare loss of between 30 and 50 percent](#) and a Social Cost of Carbon (SCC) in excess of \$1,500 per ton of carbon dioxide,¹⁷ ‘an order of magnitude larger than previously thought.’¹⁸

Average heating in 2024 was ~1.4°C, according to the [World Meteorological Organization](#).¹⁹ Modeling by the United Nations Environment Programme shows that within the next decade, global temperatures will exceed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the aspirational ceiling that countries agreed to under the 2015 Paris Agreement. Based on current national policies of countries that have ratified the agreement, global heating is expected to rise to 2.8°C by 2100. The withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement will add another 0.1°C of warming to that number.²⁰ This would push the GDP decline to 60-70% by the end of the century.

Global heating is caused by unprecedented levels of greenhouse gases in the Earth’s atmosphere. Most of this build-up of heat-trapping carbon dioxide and methane molecules originates from the combustion of fossil fuels – coal, oil and fossil gas for energy purposes.²¹

¹⁶ Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (January 2025). Planetary solvency – finding our balance with nature. University of Exeter. <https://actuaries.org.uk/media/wqeftma1/planetary-solvency-finding-our-balance-with-nature.pdf>

¹⁷ Currently, Canada’s industrial carbon price is \$80/tonne CO₂ with a schedule to increase to \$170/tonne CO₂ by 2030. <https://climateinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Fact-Sheet-Industrial-Carbon-Pricing.pdf>; <https://www.ipolitics.ca/2025/11/05/carney-defends-revamped-industrial-carbon-price-which-one-expert-says-could-capture-more-emissions/>

¹⁸ Bilal, A. & Känzig, D. (May 2024, Revised September 2025). The Macroeconomic impact of climate change: Global versus local temperature. National Bureau of Economic Research. Working Paper 32450 <http://www.nber.org/papers/w32450>.

¹⁹ WMO (Oct 31, 2025). State of the Climate Update for COP30. <https://wmo.int/sites/default/files/2025-11/State%20of%20the%20Climate%202025%20Update%20COP30%20%2831%20oct%29.pdf>

²⁰ United Nations Environment Programme (2025). *Emissions Gap Report 2025: Off Target - Continued Collective inaction puts Global Temperature Goal at Risk - Executive Summary*. <https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/48856>.

²¹ World Meteorological Organization (Oct 31, 2025). State of the Climate Update for COP30. <https://wmo.int/publication-series/state-of-climate-update-cop30>

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the scientific body associated with the UNFCCC. Their 6th Assessment Report on climate change mitigation in 2022 stated,

Limiting warming to well below 2°C will require substantial energy system changes over the next 30 years. This includes reduced fossil fuel consumption, increased production from low- and zero-carbon energy sources, and increased use of electricity and alternative energy carriers....If investments in coal and other fossil infrastructure continue, energy systems will be locked in to higher emissions, making it harder to limit warming to well below 2°C...The economic impact of stranded assets could amount to trillions of dollars. Coal assets are most vulnerable over the coming decade; oil and gas assets are more vulnerable toward mid-century.²²

This is the world in which NB Power operates. Not only is climate change affecting the financial stability of the utility, NB Power contributes to climate change. Electricity accounts for over 23 percent of New Brunswick's total emissions, equal to the emissions produced by the oil and gas sector (primarily at the Irving Oil refinery), and only slightly below transportation (27.3 percent).²³ The global and local challenge, in solidarity with our children's future, is to transition the New Brunswick energy system off fossil fuels (coal, oil and fossil gas), replacing them rapidly with renewable sources of electricity.

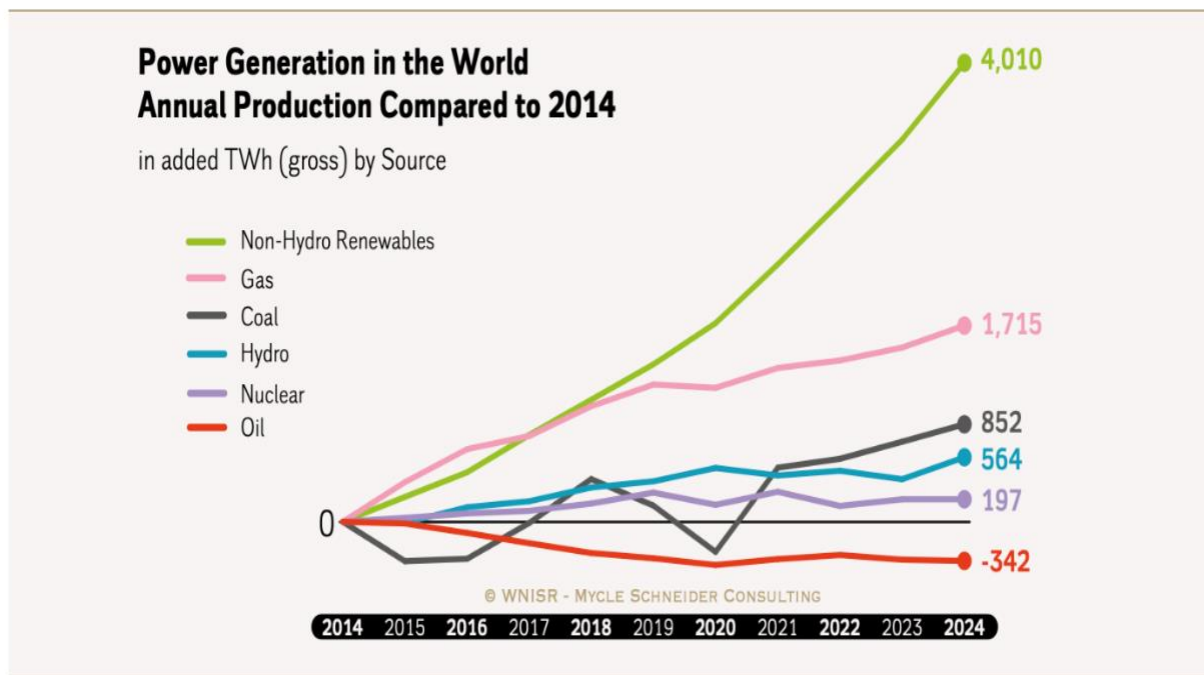
While the energy transition is not happening fast enough, it is underway. The global trends for energy system transition are clear. Figure 1 shows that over the past decade, oil-fired electrical generation capacity declined. Meanwhile non-hydro renewable energy capacity rose dramatically, vastly outpacing growth in fossil gas and coal generation. Nuclear power generation barely increased production globally.

The good news is that as a small province with relatively low energy demand, we should be nimble enough to pivot quickly in this direction. The bad news is New Brunswick is doubling down on the conventional energy path that is fueling climate change and has dug a very deep hole in which NB Power is now mired. It's time to turn things around before it is too late. Nuclear power is being touted as New Brunswick's primary greenhouse gas reduction strategy. As we show in the next section, this is not viable strategy financially. It is also not in line with

²² Clarke, L., Y.-M. Wei, A. De La Vega Navarro, A. Garg, A.N. Hahmann, S. Khennas, I.M.L. Azevedo, A. Löschel, A.K. Singh, L. Steg, G. Strbac, K. Wada, 2022: Energy Systems. In IPCC, 2022: Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. Contribution of Working Group III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [P.R. Shukla, J. Skea, R. Slade, A. Al Khourdajie, R. van Diemen, D. McCollum, M. Pathak, S. Some, P. Vyas, R. Fradera, M. Belkacemi, A. Hasija, G. Lisboa, S. Luz, J. Malley, (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA. doi: 10.1017/9781009157926.008.

²³ [Government of New Brunswick. GHG Emissions Dashboard 2023 data.](#)

the timelines for avoiding climate change tipping points. Further, it transfers unthinkable and unethical burdens from this generation to the next.²⁴



Source: Energy Institute, 2025

Figure 1: Change in capacity to annual electricity production from a 2014 baseline.²⁵

With this legal, economic and ethical lens as context, we now address each of the four elements that the NB Power Review Panel is considering.

III. Financial Sustainability

The short financial story is that NB Power is burdened with an untenable debt without productive assets to offset it. Furthermore, the burden of this debt, along with the escalating costs of fossil fuels and replacement power for extended outages at Point Lepreau is being borne by their customers through regular rate hikes. It is fair to say that NB Power customers receive a monthly ‘nuclear power bill’. This exacerbates the affordability crisis, which itself is

²⁴ M.V. Ramana (2024). Nuclear power is not the solution: The folly of atomic power in the age of climate change. Verso Books.

²⁵ Figure 1 image: The World Nuclear Industry Status Report (2025). A Mycle Schneider Consulting Project. Paris, September 2025. p. 424. <https://www.worldnuclearreport.org/IMG/pdf/wnisr2025-v1.pdf>

[fueled by speculation in global oil markets](#)²⁶ and climate change-driven increases in food prices.^{27 28 29}

NB Power is not viable by the standard financial criteria one applies to private sector utilities, primarily due to i) the speculative decision to build the Point Lepreau nuclear plant,³⁰ and ii) the decision, against the ruling of the Public Utilities Board (now EUB), to rebuild the unit when faced with premature aging problems. Both these decisions, not just the refurbishment, have resulted in an unsustainable debt load for a small utility. That there has been no accountability for either of these financially disastrous decisions simply encourages ongoing irresponsible decisions.

Despite its troubled, expensive history with nuclear energy, NB Power remains stuck in uranium. The poor performance of NB Power's Point Lepreau nuclear plant is the main reason the utility loses money almost every year. The utility even lacks the internal capacity to manage the nuclear plant, paying the Ontario nuclear operator \$75 million over three years, plus the option for performance bonuses, for this service.³¹ An unknowable cost³² is that of decommissioning Point Lepreau and stewarding in perpetuity the contaminated site and its radioactive wastes regardless of where they end up, a responsibility that will likely outlive NB Power but remain borne by New Brunswickers. Remarkably, NB Power wants to build more nuclear reactors even though nuclear is the highest-cost option to power the province.

²⁶ Stanford, J. and Weir, E. (March 2025). Counting the costs: Impacts of the 2022 oil price shock for Canadian consumers and workers. Centre for the Future of Work. <https://centreforfuturework.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/FalseProfits-March2025-Counting-the-Costs.pdf>

²⁷Savage, S. (Jul 3, 2024). Climate change is pushing up food prices — and worrying central banks. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/125e89c0-308a-492f-ae8e-6834847d1186>

²⁸ Carter, O. (July 21, 2025). Climate Change Impact on Food Prices Canada Driving Grocery Costs Up. CO24. <https://co24.ca/climate-impact-food-prices/>

²⁹ Kotz, M. *et al* (2025). Climate extremes, food price spikes, and their wider societal risks *Environ. Res. Lett.* **20** 081001. <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ade45f>

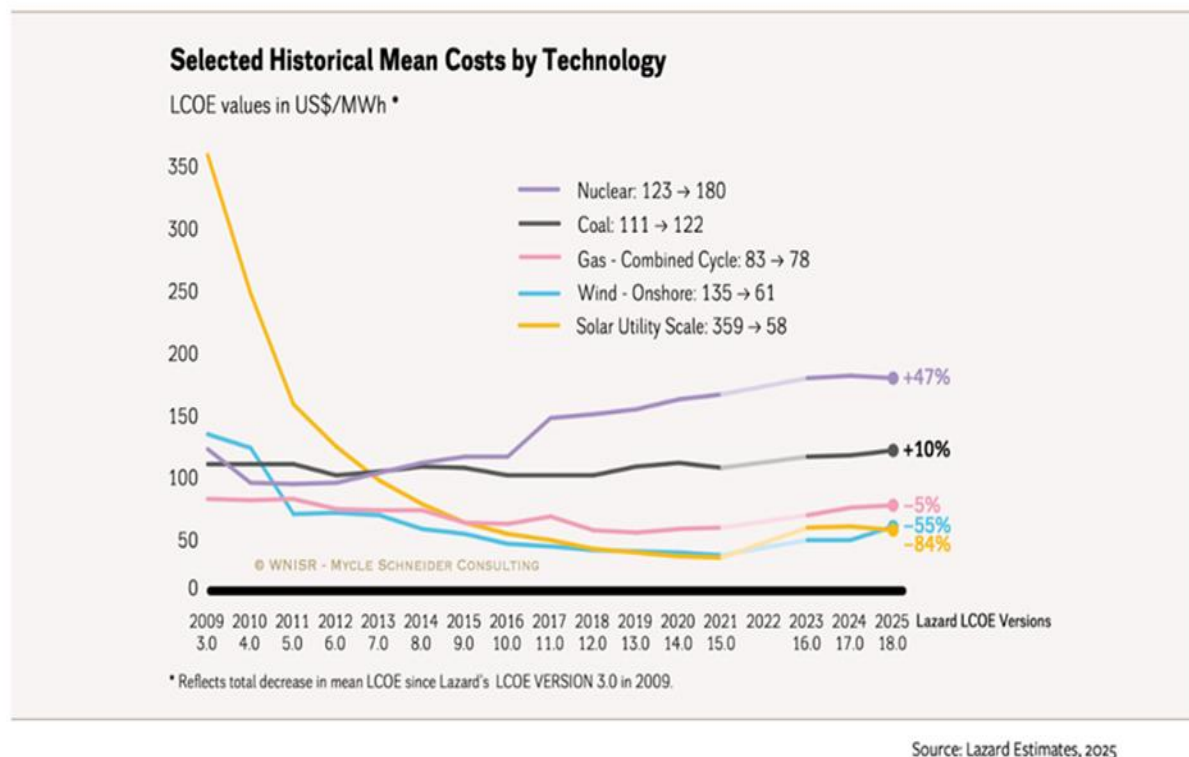
³⁰ Secord, A. G. (2020). Nuclear Power Decision-Making in New Brunswick, 1971-1975, *Acadiensis* 49, no.1: 123-150.

³¹ Brown, S. CBC News, (October 24, 2025). Province puts energy security over energizing N.B. economy as it shops for nuclear reactors. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/new-brunswick-looking-to-expand-nuclear-power-generation-9.6952477>

³² Since no jurisdiction has experience with this over the timeframes necessary, current estimates are entirely speculative.

There is a strong case against nuclear power as a climate-friendly supply option.^{33 34}

Over the past 15 years, renewable energy costs dropped dramatically. During this time, nuclear power's costs increased almost 50 percent (Figure 2 below). A plan to build another reactor in New Brunswick is only going to drive up power rates when ratepayers are already struggling. Only renewables have the potential to stabilize rates.



Notes: **LCOE**: Levelized Cost of Energy

*Figure 2: Declining costs of renewables vs. traditional power sources.*³⁵ Note that these figures are from the United States where the costs associated with fossil fuels do not include an industrial carbon price. Imposing such a price, as Canada has done, would increase the costs for coal and gas.

NB Power is doing a great disservice to New Brunswickers by perpetuating the myth that new nuclear power is a climate solution. By [objective measures](#), building new nuclear power plants will cost more, take longer to deploy, and introduce catastrophic accident risks—relative to improving energy productivity, expanding renewables with energy storage, and developing distributed energy resources. Reactor design, planning, and build times are [notoriously long](#)—

³³ The World Nuclear Industry Status Report (2025). A Mycle Schneider Consulting Project. Paris, September 2025.

³⁴ M. V. Ramana (2024). Nuclear is Not the Solution: The Folly of Atomic Power in the Age of Climate Change. Verso Books.

³⁵ Figure 2 image: The World Nuclear Industry Status Report (2025). A Mycle Schneider Consulting Project. Paris, September 2025. p. 417. <https://www.worldnuclearreport.org/IMG/pdf/wnisr2025-v1.pdf>

usually measured in decades—with well-established patterns of significant “unexpected” delays. Pinning climate action on new nuclear builds or reactor refurbishments delays climate action well beyond the 2030 timeline, while deflecting finances away from cheaper, quicker and non-polluting renewables.

Further, NB Power needs to admit openly to the public that its “advanced SMR” project has proven to be a failure. In 2018, NB Power invited into New Brunswick two foreign companies, neither of which had any track record with nuclear power, to build their experimental “advanced” reactor designs at the utility’s Point Lepreau nuclear site.

CEDAR researchers, then under the auspices of the RAVEN research project, met with then-Energy Minister Holland to advise against this path. Based on analysis of the considerable literature available at the time (this body of knowledge has only continued to grow), we flagged the two proposed reactor designs as “power point reactors” and unlikely to succeed, especially within the unrealistic timeframes promised. NB Power never disclosed the proposed costs.³⁶

NB Power continued its SMR promotion and sales pitches. After almost \$100-million in public funds (federal and provincial), and seven years of fairy tales about New Brunswick becoming a global leader in SMR production, neither is financially or technologically viable. It gives us no pleasure to now say we told you so. Had Minister Holland listened, New Brunswick would be \$30 million less in the hole and on a more sustainable energy path.

While the Holt government has finally abandoned the Moltex-ARC propaganda machine,³⁷ the nuclear fantasy is alive and well within NB Power and the government. Whether it is a [second full-scale CANDU](#) (even though the first one was too big and too expensive for our grid), or some ‘off-the-shelf’ not-small not-modular reactors now being built in Ontario, no matter which nuclear reactor NB Power chooses, it will be the most expensive option on order to reduce emissions and provide energy security. New Brunswick ratepayers cannot afford that menu, and taxpayers cannot afford to subsidize any more nuclear dreams.

Indeed, it is a great injustice to New Brunswickers to not prioritize the cheapest, cleanest option for new electricity supply: namely, renewables coupled with battery storage. Other jurisdictions are already working out how to do this, experience we can benefit from.

We note also that the Peskotomukhati Nation, in whose territory Point Lepreau is located, did not consent to the original CANDU reactor build and have made numerous interventions

³⁶ O’Donnell, S., Comeau, L., Harvey, J., Edwards, G., Ramana, M.V. (2021) The proposed nuclear reactors (SMRs) for New Brunswick (Briefing Paper). Fredericton: RAVEN research project, University of New Brunswick. March 1. <https://raven-research.org/smrs-nb-briefing>

³⁷ Brown, S. (Oct 24, 2025). Province puts energy security over energizing N.B. economy as it shops for nuclear reactors. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/new-brunswick-looking-to-expand-nuclear-power-generation-9.6952477>.

against plans to build a new reactor on the site. The Nation and Wolastoq Grand Council are firmly opposed to the production and storage of radioactive waste on their homeland. The CEDAR project and the Passamaquoddy Recognition Group Inc. (PRGI) recently co-published a report showing that Indigenous nations in New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario are overwhelmingly opposed to more nuclear development and the planned transportation of radioactive waste from the Point Lepreau site across their territory to Indigenous lands in Ontario.³⁸

*United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres: Investing in new fossil fuel infrastructure is "moral and economic madness."*³⁹

At a time when NB Power should be working on a plan to phase-out existing thermal power plants in line with the zero-carbon energy transition, the utility is contracting with an American company to build a 500-MW fossil fuel plant in Tantramar.⁴⁰ The 25-year billion dollar power purchase agreement is NB Power's biggest energy investment in more than a decade. The so-called Renewable Integration and Grid Security (RIGS) project, named to mislead the public as to its actual nature, has been described both as an intermittent plant to back up renewables and in the same news story, a baseload plant to meet growing demand within a few years.⁴¹ In a more recent story, the two divergent views appear again.⁴² Both of these cannot be true. A

³⁸ Bartlett, A., Atwin, R. & O'Donnell, S. (2024). Indigenous views on nuclear energy and radioactive waste. Passamaquoddy Recognition Group Inc. and the CEDAR project at St. Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick, November. <https://cedar-project.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2024-Indigenous-views-on-nuclear-energy-and-waste.pdf>

³⁹ United Nations (2022). Secretary-General Warns of Climate Emergency, Calling Intergovernmental Panel's Report 'a File of Shame', While Saying Leaders 'Are Lying', Fuelling Flames. SG/SM/21228. 4 April 2022. <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21228.doc.htm>

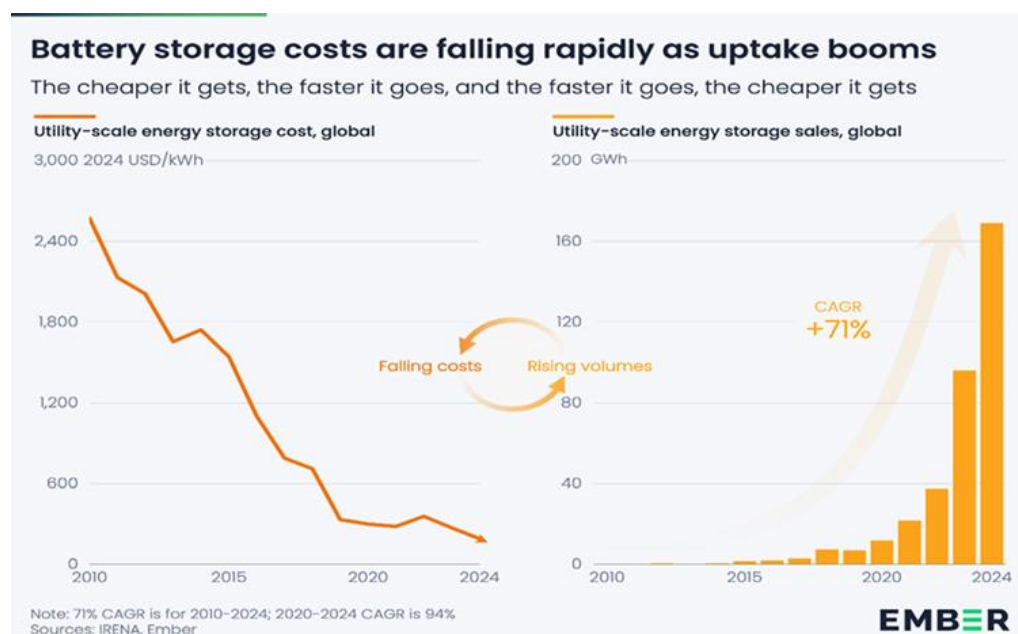
⁴⁰ NB Power would contract for 400MW; the project submitted for environmental impact assessment is for 500MW. Meanwhile, the Letter of Intent between ProEnergy and the North Shore Mi'kmaq Tribal Council indicates an eventual expansion to 800 MW. Erica Butler (Nov. 13, 2025). [Gas plant documents confirm Mi'kmaw group's strong interest, but no deal | CBC News](#).

⁴¹ Poitras, J. (July 16, 2025). N.B. Power, U.S. company pick Tantramar site for natural gas plant. CBC News. Quoting Brad Coady of NB Power: ["What we're looking for is nimble machines that can come on, come on quickly and only stay on as long as is needed to integrate that wind energy. It'll fill in the voids when the wind isn't there and the sun isn't there...What we're looking for is nimble machines that can come on, come on quickly and only stay on as long as is needed to integrate that wind energy. It'll fill in the voids when the wind isn't there and the sun isn't there."](#) From the same article: [The plant would begin operating in 2028 and would be able to generate 500 megawatts of electricity, most of it to meet growing demand caused by population growth.](#)

⁴² Butler, E. (Oct 16, 2015). [Proponent of natural gas plant to Tantramar council: 'Fact-check me'](#), CBC News. From the article: "This is predominantly a synchronous condensing facility to enable renewables," said [ProEnergy Canada's John] MacIsaac, referring to the plan to run the turbines 85 per cent of the time without burning gas or generating energy, but simply to provide voltage support to the grid." The possible need for turbines to provide grid stability is not mentioned in N.B. Power's 2023 Integrated Resource Plan. The terms "synchronous condensing" or "voltage support" aren't mentioned either. Brad Coady, a vice-president at N.B. Power, recently told a legislative committee that the proposed gas plant was actually born out of predictions that the utility might run short of base load power by 2028. That "triggered a bunch of activities that led to us doing a request for proposals in the summer of 2024," Coady said. "And ultimately led us to where we are today, with the chosen

peaker plant to back up renewable power is meant to be used only intermittently, and a baseload plant is meant to provide continuous power to meet ongoing demand. The economics of the intermittent version of the story are especially questionable. In what world does a private company build a billion-dollar gas plant and not intend to run it for maximum output? How does this not maximize its greenhouse gas output? Unfortunately, both federal and provincial governments have rejected the call by citizens and provincial and municipal public representatives for a comprehensive environmental impact assessment which would deconstruct the company's and NB Power's highly unlikely claims that the plant would result in 'net-zero emissions.'

The initial claim that the Tantramar fossil gas plant is the best, least-cost option for pairing with renewable power is not supported: lower cost energy storage systems exist and are available to build now (Figure 3).^{43 44}



*Figure 3:
Battery storage
costs are falling
rapidly as
uptake booms.*

A study of projects that would generate electricity in 2030 by Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) estimated that the cost of power from solar PV and onshore wind were between AUD 35 and 63 (CAD 32 to 58) per MWh and AUD 64

technological solution and partner for the delivery of that project." N.B. Power originally asked for proposals for a plant to deliver up to 400 megawatts of power, but ProEnergy has been seeking approval for up to 500.'

⁴³ A 2023 study by Clean Energy Canada found that every combination of renewables and storage was cheaper than both types of gas in Alberta except for solar PV and storage with 8-hour duration, which was projected to beat CCGTs from around mid-2024 onwards. In Ontario it's a similar story, although solar and storage does have a more challenging runway to cost parity with CCGT there. Solar with eight hours of storage won't be cheaper than CCGTs until the early 2030s while the shorter duration energy storage with solar PV should become cheaper during 2023.

⁴⁴ <https://ember-energy.org/latest-insights/silos-for-sunshine-weve-mastered-harvesting-the-sun-but-storage-is-the-gamechanger/>

and 107 (CAD 59 to 98) per MWH respectively.⁴⁵ When integration costs are included to account for the variability of wind and solar power, the cost of electricity is estimated to be in the range of AUD 90 to 131 (CAD 82 to 120) per MWH even when variable resources constitute 90 percent of the electricity supply. For comparison, CSIRO's estimate for the levelized cost of energy for an SMR project starting to deliver power in 2030 was between AUD 328 and 619 (USD 300 to 566) per MWH. In other words, the electricity grid can be operated reliably at a modest extra cost, without fossil fuels or nuclear power.

The assertion that NB Power will be short of power by 2028 because of population growth is also unsupported. Only in NB Power's EUB filing submitted on November 10, 2025 did the utility admit that planned data centres are driving demand growth projections, even though in 2023, the New Brunswick government changed the *Electricity Act* to forbid New Brunswick to supply power to new cryptocurrency mining operations in the province precisely because of their high demand.⁴⁶

Recently we have learned of a \$2 billion data centre proposal by Calgary-based Beacon AI Centers to be sited in the Lorneville Industrial Park with a power demand of 380MW. As part of the package, an American fossil gas company, VoltaGrid, would build an adjacent 190MW gas plant, supplying half the new demand. The other 190MW, according to the company spokesman at a public meeting in Lorneville on Nov. 5, 2025, would come from NB Power's grid.⁴⁷ The data centre would come online in 2028, the same timeline that NB Power's Brad Coady warned New Brunswick could fall short in meeting provincial demand, and the same timeline that the Tantramar plant is intended to go live. NB Power is clearly not being straight with the public.

This rush to build new fossil gas plants comes at the same time that industrial giant JDI is looking for approval to build a 200MW wind farm (phase one with more in phase two) to have on-line by 2027. The company ultimately intends to unplug some portion or all of its industrial load from the grid, as much as 240MW. JDI is lobbying the government to change the *Electricity Act* to allow private companies to generate their own electricity off-site of their production operations.⁴⁸ If they are successful, this would force a fundamental restructuring of NB Power's load profile and a dramatic shift in generation planning.

⁴⁵ Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation. (July 29, 2025). "GenCost: Cost of Building Australia's Future Electricity Needs." <https://www.csiro.au/en/research/technology-space/energy/Electricity-transition/GenCost>.

⁴⁶ Two existing crypto mining operations have a combined load of 96MW.

⁴⁷ CBC/Radio-Canada. (Nov 6, 2025). Saint John residents turn data centre open house into town hall to question proponents. <https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/saint-john-residents-turn-data-centre-open-house-into-town-hall-to-question-proponents/ar-AA1PVhYb?ocid=BingNewsSerp>

⁴⁸ Chilibeck, J. (Sept 11, 2025). JDI wants to steer more independent path on electricity. Telegraph-Journal. <https://tj.news/new-brunswick/fed-up-with-nb-power-jdi-wants-to-steer-its-own-course-on-energy>

The ProEnergy contract to buy fossil fuel-generated electricity for 25-years comes at a time when: i) oil and gas prices are increasingly volatile, 2) the Carney government has committed to strengthening the industrial carbon pricing regime to which NB Power and any future private gas plants are subject and iii) the world is transitioning to cheaper renewables to protect against rising costs and reduce the impacts of climate change.

According the Canadian Climate Institute, provincial governments are pursuing AI data centres at a time when

electricity is increasingly scarce, and data centres are hungry for power now with uncertain future demand. Without care, new data centres could exacerbate concerns around electricity affordability and reliability, and create headwinds for decarbonization.... Adding new infrastructure to meet data centre demands means adding big new capital costs that have to be paid down over time. As that happens, the unit cost of electricity can increase and existing customers could end up paying more on their bills.... The race to build data centres, and to source power quickly, is also raising concerns about clean energy progress. In Alberta, if planned data centres go forward using gas power, the province's electricity emissions would roughly double.... Similar concerns are emerging in places where the need for speed is leading to proposals to keep existing gas and coal plants running longer.⁴⁹

With this and future AI data centre proposals, it appears that the Holt government is prepared to force NB Power into making ill-considered short-term decisions with long-term negative consequences for NB Power ratepayers, climate targets, adjacent communities, and local ecosystems. NB Power and New Brunswick are hitching their wagon to the wrong horse, and it will cost New Brunswickers dearly.⁵⁰

All of this – the crisis of climate change, the nuclear pipedream and new fossil fuel infrastructure builds - foreshadows the ongoing financial unsustainability of the utility, and at

⁴⁹ Harland, K. (March 31, 2025). Is there a smart way to integrate artificial intelligence data centres into Canada's electricity grids? Canadian Climate Institute. <https://climateinstitute.ca/smart-way-integrate-artificial-intelligence-data-centres-canada-electricity-grids/>.

⁵⁰ The prospect of siting AI data centres in New Brunswick necessitates a strategic public policy and utility planning approach. According to the Canadian Climate Institute, "Canadian policymakers need clear policy frameworks that guide utilities through current decisions on competing industrial-scale demands, ensuring immediate choices align with broader objectives. Equally crucial is the need for provinces to develop energy plans that provide longer-term roadmaps. These plans should consider and evaluate economic growth opportunities while setting guidance on electricity affordability, grid reliability, and emissions reductions. In doing so, they help decision-makers determine the desired pace and scale of future infrastructure expansion. Anything less risks higher rates, increased emissions, missed economic opportunities—or all of the above."

the same time the strong potential of undermining rather than bolstering the grid stability. Bad decisions following bad decisions.

IV. Investor Attractiveness and Strategic Partnerships

Global energy systems are transitioning to renewable energy and NB Power needs to do the same.

Clearly, given NB Power's dismal financial situation and precarious supply assets, it is vitally important to target investments and partnerships that will deliver the greatest returns with the least risk. Neither NB Power nor the provincial government can afford to throw good money after bad. Because the energy transition is global, it is important to understand global trends, rather than keeping the blinders on, focused on the North American scene which is bucking global trends, digging the climate change hole even deeper.

The North American energy transition discourse is riddled with fanciful propaganda about so-called 'clean' technologies such as nuclear, LNG, hydrogen and carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS). These technologies have no role in genuine climate action, while ignoring the dominating current position of solar, wind and energy storage. This narrative has captured both federal and provincial governments and is opening direct channels through which massive amounts of tax-dollars (as opposed to private investment) are set to flow. This is simply doubling down on 20th century conventional energy regimes, which are money losers in both the short term (nuclear) and long term (LNG, CCUS) and now primarily serve to suck up public funds to keep their dying industries alive while delaying the transition to renewable energy.

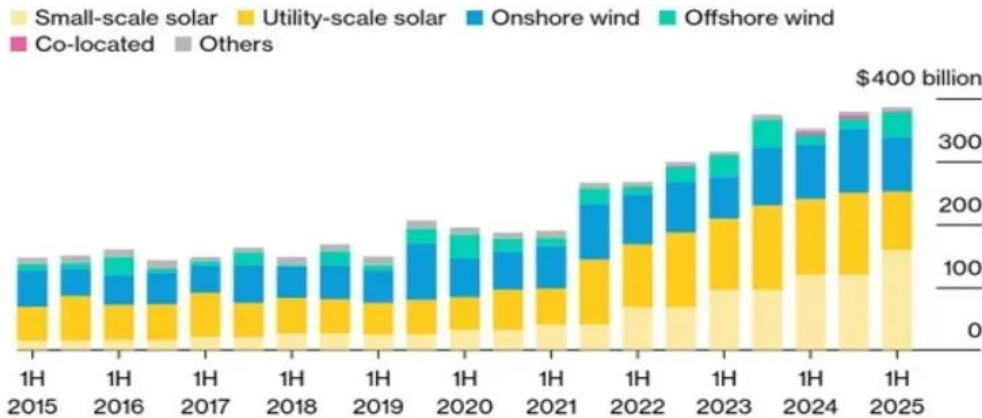
Bloomberg's 2025 report on global energy transition trends explains what's going on outside of this North American bubble. "Energy transition investment denotes real-economy investment commitments and spending to deploy clean-energy technology and infrastructure that is aligned to net zero." Real money is flowing to real solutions, not wishful thinking projects backed by the old boys network dominating the energy sector.⁵¹

⁵¹ Bloomberg NEF (Jan 2025). Energy Transition Investment Report: Tracking Global Investment in Clean Energy Transition. 2025. Abridged report. https://assets.bbhub.io/professional/sites/24/951623_BNEF-Energy-Transition-Trends-2025-Abridged.pdf. From the report: Global energy transition investment has surpassed \$2 trillion for the first time and more than doubled since 2020, but growth slowed to just 10.7% in 2024, from 24-29% in each of the years 2021-23. By far the largest sectors are electrified transport at \$757 billion, renewable energy at \$728 billion and power grids at \$390 billion. All three of these sectors grew to new records in 2024, as did energy storage, which shrugged off headwinds to reach \$54 billion.

In contrast, the other seven sectors (nuclear, carbon capture and storage, hydrogen, clean shipping, electrified heat and clean industry), together accounted for just 7.4% of total investment, and actually declined 23% in 2024, illustrating the ongoing challenges in scaling up 'emerging' clean technologies

Renewable Energy Investment Reaches Record \$386 Billion in 1H 2025

Global new renewable energy investment

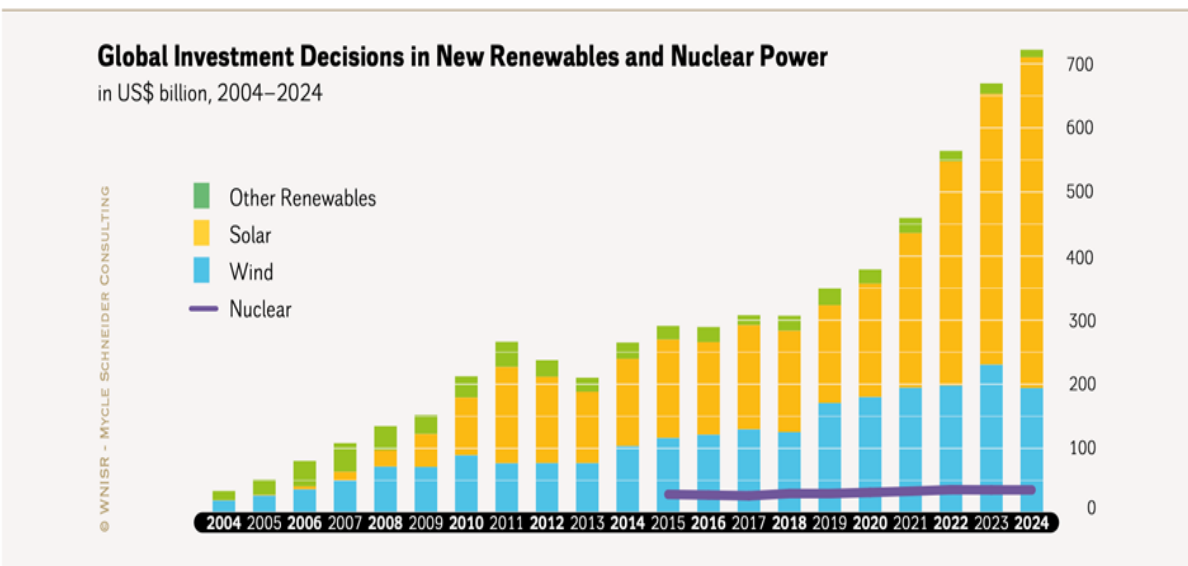


Source: BloombergNEF

Note: Small-scale solar investment is a blend of consumer spending and asset finance. Utility-scale solar includes photovoltaic (PV) and solar thermal projects. 'Others' includes biofuels, geothermal, biomass and waste, small hydro and marine.

BloombergNEF

Figure 4: Renewable energy investments globally over the past decade.



Source: BloombergNEF, 2025

Figure 5. Global investment decisions in new renewables and nuclear power 2004-2024.⁵²

Figure 4 tracks the growing investment in renewables over the past 10 years, while Figure 5 compares that to investment in nuclear. This comparison is a powerful statement about where

⁵² image: The World Nuclear Industry Status Report (2025). A Mycle Schneider Consulting Project Paris, September 2025. p. 414. <https://www.worldnuclearreport.org/IMG/pdf/wnisr2025-v1.pdf>

energy transition investors are putting their money. Figure 5 shows nuclear as a non-starter for private investors. The only way private money flows into nuclear is if governments de-risk the investment. New Brunswick ratepayers/taxpayers cannot afford that, currently drowning as we are in legacy nuclear debt.

Notably, Bloomberg calls electrified transport, renewables and power grids **‘mature technologies.’**

BNEF’s report reveals a marked difference between investment in mature and emerging sectors of the clean energy economy. Technologies that are proven, commercially scalable and have established business models, like renewables, energy storage, electric vehicles, and power grids, accounted for the vast majority of investment in 2024. These sectors drew \$1.93 trillion, growing 14.7%, despite hindrance from policy decisions, higher interest rates and expected slower consumer purchasing.

In contrast, investment in emerging technologies, like electrified heat, hydrogen, carbon capture and storage (CCS), nuclear, clean industry and clean shipping, reached only \$155 billion, for an overall drop of 23% year-on-year. Factors that discourage investment in these sectors include affordability, technology maturity, and commercial scalability. In order to scale these industries, the public and private sectors need to do more to de-risk these technologies, otherwise, they are not likely to have any meaningful impact on emissions by the end of the decade.⁵³

This narrative from a leader in business investment analysis is not the narrative we hear from NB Power and the New Brunswick government. Instead, New Brunswickers are being told that renewable power supply options are fringy alternatives suitable for back to the landers, not the real world of energy security and utility-scale supply. Figure 4 demonstrates clearly where investor preferences lie, and they are not with nuclear, NB Power’s preferred option.

A September 2025 report for Bloomberg delved into individual companies’ uptake of renewables to support their operations, and to locate/relocate their businesses where they have access to renewables.

Companies are also increasingly investing in building their own renewable energy infrastructure. This move from operating expenditure to capital expenditure suggests a deeper pivot from short-term procurement to long-term energy resilience.

In 2023, 4,166 listed large and mid-cap companies reported using renewable energy, a 72% increase in just 3 years. With a combined market cap of \$73 trillion, these companies account for about half the global total of \$151 trillion as of June 6,

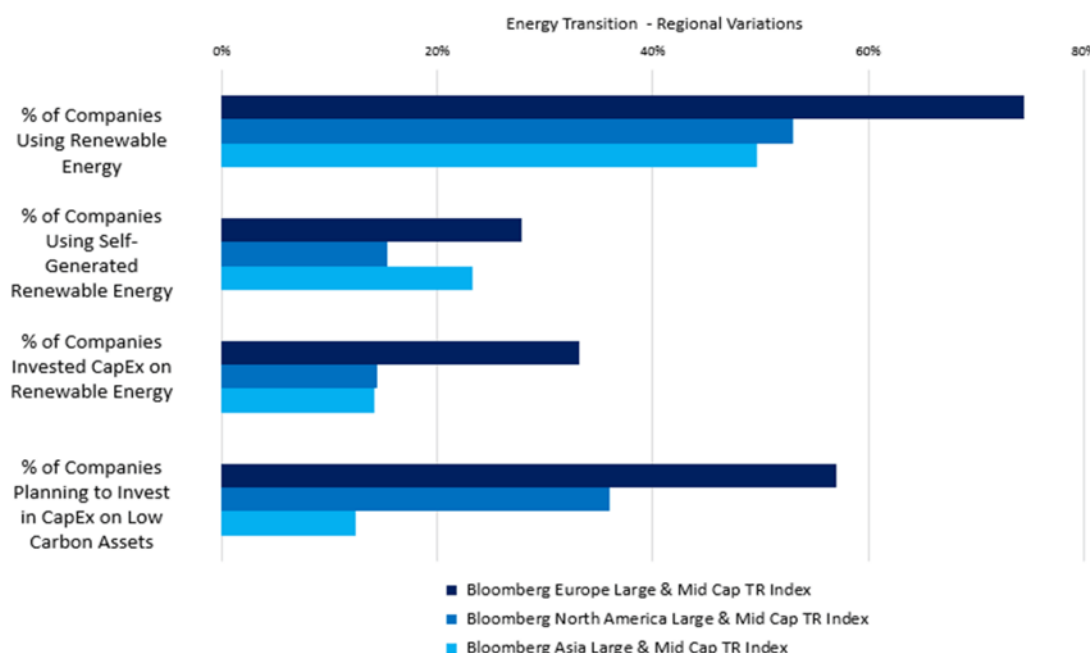
⁵³ <https://about.bnef.com/insights/finance/global-investment-in-the-energy-transition-exceeded-2-trillion-for-the-first-time-in-2024-according-to-bloombergnef-report/>

2025. Over 2,300 companies also increased their renewable energy use from 2022 to 2023 alone. This dramatic rise in adoption spans nearly all sectors, including industrials, materials, healthcare, consumer staples, technology, financials, and real estate.

It's a geographic shift too, as companies rethink their footprints to align with cleaner energy access. A recent [global survey](#) of over 1,500 business leaders showed that over half of respondents are planning to relocate operations to access renewable energy within the next five years.⁵⁴

Bloomberg calls this a 'structural long term shift;' in other words, there is a growing and stable market for renewable electricity. Utilities had better get on board or be left behind.

Figure 2: Regional Variations in Renewable Energy Adoption



Source: Bloomberg L.P.

Figure 6. Company adoption of renewable energy by region. This is Figure 2 in the report in footnote 42.

The report also investigated financial performance of companies that have integrated renewable energy into their operations to varying degrees. As a tip to investors, it concludes:

Our findings suggest financial benefits linked to greater renewable energy adoption, warranting further examination.... Investors, whether explicitly focused on energy

⁵⁴Schets, E. (September 16, 2025). Power shift: Should investors pay attention to renewable energy adoption? Bloomberg Professional Services. <https://www.bloomberg.com/professional/insights/sustainable-finance/power-shift-should-investors-pay-attention-to-renewable-energy-adoption/>

transition or not, may therefore benefit from studying and incorporating this signal into their investment processes.”⁵⁵

The growing number of companies globally that have taken on commitments to achieving net-zero emissions is influencing the market for renewable electricity.

Simultaneously, private sector net-zero commitments are growing. The annual cumulative number of companies with net-zero targets and commitments has grown from 546 to 4,205 in three years. Today, almost 60 per cent of the world’s 2,000 largest companies by annual revenue have their own net-zero targets, with 39 per cent of global market capitalization made up of companies who have science-based targets, as of 2023. And while this trend has faced some recent headwinds, corporate climate targets in Canada have remained resilient. At an international level, global capital has continued to target clean projects and zero-emission goods and services, with total investments in 2024 exceeding \$2 trillion for the first time, despite a slow-down in the rate of growth. Similarly, U.S. clean energy investments hit a record high in the latest quarter of 2024.⁵⁶

Renewable energy investments are already signalling the way forward in New Brunswick

The global trend for investment in renewable energy is already happening in New Brunswick. Saint John Energy has built its entire growth strategy around renewables (wind and solar), storage, efficiency and strategic partnerships – and meeting net-zero emissions targets.⁵⁷

Near the end of 2024, the federal government committed funding for Indigenous-led wind energy projects generating 670 MW. Earlier this year, NB Power signed power purchase agreements with four of the new Indigenous-led wind projects totaling more than 450 MW. The new wind farms are expected to be operating by 2028. This investment signalled that Ottawa recognizes New Brunswick has a strong wind energy resource. Wind energy is the right direction for the utility.⁵⁸ Distributed wind and storage systems developed with local community engagement and community benefits will strengthen the grid and make it more resilient during future extreme weather events.

Developing its capacity and expertise with wind energy now will pay dividends in future as NB Power engages with the big wind energy opportunity on the horizon: wind energy off the

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Vanderhoof, A. (March 27, 2025). [Investing in clean power can lead to big pay offs for Canada’s economy](#). Canadian Climate Institute.

⁵⁷ <https://sjenergy.ca/about/growth-strategy-2020>;
<https://www.pressreader.com/canada/telegraph-journal/20241211/281505051805274>.

⁵⁸ A question remains about the ability to seamlessly integrate privately-owned wind generation with storage on the grid.

Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia's offshore wind regime is the among the strongest in the world. In October, the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator launched the process to identify proponents who would bid on a future call to develop the first offshore wind project in Canada. In January of this year, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada completed a regional assessment report for offshore wind development.⁵⁹ In June, the Nova Scotia government announced its 40 GW Wind West offshore wind development, a mind-boggling scale equal to more than a quarter of Canada's total installed electrical grid capacity. This project is highly anticipated to end up on Prime Minister Carney's list of 'nation-building' projects.

NB Power needs to position itself to take advantage of opportunities presented by this multi-billion-dollar, multi-generational wind energy project. With upgraded transmission infrastructure, the offshore wind resource is intended to feed renewable energy through to Ontario, as well as to northeastern U.S. Transmission via New Brunswick will be central to this plan. NB Power needs to position itself as a player. NB Power needs the management and infrastructure capacity to support the development of a regional electric energy system powered by wind energy, with interconnected grids and storage for electricity surplus.

V. Customer Expectations

Customers expect a public electrical utility they can trust; they are getting the opposite.

While customers expect affordable, reliable electricity, they also expect transparency and truthfulness. There are many complaints about the former, but there is also a deeper trust problem when new initiatives are taken on without full disclosure, prior and informed consent of Indigenous communities, and genuine oversight by regulatory bodies.

NB Power's history unfortunately is riddled with examples of the utility misleading the public and making terrible business decisions without proper oversight. This history has led to the current lack of trust New Brunswickers have for their public utility.

The Tantramar RIGS plant is the latest example of the utility being less than open. NB Power has attempted to hide from the public basic facts about the project. A gas plant was decided upon, a contract signed with an American company, and a site selected before the project became public. The name of the project – Renewable Integration and Grid Security (RIGS) – is deliberately misleading. Once the facts came out, the public quickly reframed it as a fracked gas/diesel plant.

NB Power then tried to avoid scrutiny of the project's economics by filing for an exemption from the Energy and Utilities Board process, a gesture of bad faith and unaccountability. To its credit, the EUB ruled against the request, as several intervenors argued it should. This process is

⁵⁹ Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (2025). [Final Report for the Regional Assessment for Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia](#). Prepared by: The Regional Assessment Committee Established by the Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change. January 23.

the only independent scrutiny this very dubious project will get, having convinced both federal and provincial governments that a comprehensive environmental impact assessment is not necessary. That decision denies the public any structured opportunity to bring evidence about the environmental harms the plant will cause, nor interrogate the evidence being filed by the company.

Both the company and NB Power have been coy about project details, and as discussed above, have made contradictory and questionable statements to the public and media. Only in the face of organized resistance did the utility reveal the project costs. Company and government claims about Indigenous partnerships were found to be false. In a recent municipal council meeting, the company spokesperson invited the public to “factcheck me” by filing a right to information request with NB Power.⁶⁰ That was an insult to the audience. This is a trend in New Brunswick, that deals with private companies are hidden by default, and getting access to that information requires extraordinary effort, often ending in failure. Bruce Wark, reporting on the same meeting, quoted two councillors as saying they do not trust the company.⁶¹

Most recently, the connection between this proposed fossil fuel plant and the AI data centre has come to light, undermining the legitimacy and credibility of NB Power even further. Sadly, it seems NB Power again cannot be trusted to tell the truth, probably because they know they can’t sell it to the public.

Meanwhile, Saint John Energy has over 90 percent public support for their renewable energy growth strategy. Saint John Energy’s goal is to stabilize power rates for their customers. They know the way to do that is to build out renewables and storage.⁶² NB Power’s strategy is to do the opposite – increase dependence on inflationary fossil fuels and promise new nuclear builds.

NB Power has also not been truthful about the nuclear nirvana being promised by the two start-ups mentioned earlier that have sucked up \$30 million from provincial taxpayer and almost \$70 million from federal taxpayers. If NB Power had done any due diligence, they knew these schemes were never going to work, especially in the timeframes promised, nor for any reasonable cost. Moltex’s claim that its design would ‘recycle’ Point Lepreau’s high level radioactive waste and the ARC claim that its reactor would re-use its own waste was pure propaganda, meant to deflect public concern about high level waste. Expert studies on prior attempts by many countries to reprocess radioactive waste have thoroughly debunked these claims⁶³.

⁶⁰ Bulter, E. (Oct. 16, 2025). CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/gas-plant-executive-fact-check-me-9.6939863>

⁶¹ Wark, B. (Oct 15, 2025). Town councillors say they don’t trust US company proposing to build gas/diesel plant in Tantramar. <https://warktimes.com/2025/10/15/town-councillors-say-they-dont-trust-us-company-proposing-to-build-gas-diesel-plant-in-tantramar/>

⁶² <https://sjenergy.ca/about/growth-strategy-2020>;

⁶³ International Panel on Fissile Materials (2015). Plutonium Separation in Nuclear Power Programs: Status, Problems, and Prospects of Civilian Reprocessing Around the World. <https://fissilematerials.org/library/rr14.pdf>

In short, NB Power's customers expect openness, transparency, truth and future-savvy, evidence-based decision-making from their public utility. Customers will only get that from a complete change in NB Power's institutional culture.

VI. Governance and Utility Structure

NB Power, stuck in the past, needs a fundamental course correction. NB Power does not have, and has not had for a long time, informed, forward-looking leadership that is able to meet the challenges before it – decarbonizing its grid in the face of climate change, willingness to step into the future – moving to where the puck is going – and taking the least cost, cleanest approach to providing reliable power and stable power rates.

This has been evident in the utility's failure to embrace its obligations under federal climate change regulations, namely to phase-out the Belledune coal plant. There was plenty of time to do this by the 2030 deadline; now it is too late. And NB Power's proposed alternative? To burn wood pellets – another carbon- and air-polluting fuel drawn from a forest that is already being unsustainably cut. Like the gas plants, this is going backward, not forward.

As an organization, NB Power appears unable to move beyond the planning models of the 1970s. NB Power has a very limited understanding of the dynamics of technological change. When problems arise, they fall back on conventional planning models from a half century ago, the same models that got the utility where it is today. Carrying on the same thinking and behaviour of NB Power for the past fifty years will not produce anything different.

Does NB Power have the organizational culture and capacity to restructure themselves to become a sustainable utility? We don't think so. This can only happen with a complete renewal of the leadership from the board through the executive and senior management. The biases and interests are too deeply vested to achieve the paradigm shift the utility needs to undergo.

VII. Conclusion

A global energy regime transition is underway. The shift is to "electrify everything," remove fossil fuels from the electrical grid, and add only renewable energy and systems to support this shift. In the midst of climate disruption, when new conditions require a fundamental rethink of the old ways of doing things, NB Power is frozen in the past. The utility needs a fundamental change of direction.

The value – indeed, the imperative – of your review is to provide an external critique of what went wrong and what is wrong at NB Power. What can be learned from the past and how can the future be different? Without a clear-eyed analysis of the structural and leadership failures, the behaviours are bound to repeat themselves, digging the power rate hole ever deeper.

We also advise you to be honest with the owners of NB Power – the people of New Brunswick – about what is needed at the utility.

We invite members of the NB Power Review panel and all readers to visit the CEDAR project website to view more information about the CEDAR project and research activities, CEDAR team members, and our publications to date at the CEDAR website [HERE](#).