

The New Brunswick Charter for Environmental Justice

We are an integral part of Nature. Water falls as rain to quench our thirst and give life to the world of plants and fish. The air we breathe is a gift from the plant world. The food that nourishes us comes from the earth and the sea.

Together, in ways more complex than humans can know, the sun, water, air, soils, plants and animals work together in ecosystems which sustain all life on Earth.

Today, these ecosystems – our forests, rivers and oceans – are degraded, and our water, air and food chain are polluted. People are suffering the consequences, through poor health, lost livelihoods, and disrupted communities. Yet they have little recourse to prevent or change the situation. This is fundamentally unjust.

Our Legislature has the ultimate responsibility to protect all citizens against environmental injustice.

The **Charter for Environmental Justice** is a declaration of fundamental principles on which an Environmental Bill of Rights in New Brunswick should be built. These principles are:

1. All people have the right to enjoy a standard of air and water quality, food and living conditions which does not pose a risk to their health.
2. Every citizen has the right to know the environmental hazards to which they may be exposed.
3. This and future generations have the right to enjoy the benefits of our public forests, waters, air, wildlife and the ecosystems of which they are a part – undiminished in their ability to sustain life and livelihoods.
4. Every citizen has the right to participate equally and directly in decisions regarding the use of Crown lands, rivers and bays, atmosphere and wildlife, and the right to full information so that participation is informed and responsible.
5. Every citizen has an obligation to act as a steward of nature, to make responsible choices to minimize their personal impact on our environment, to be informed, and to actively participate in civic life and decision-making to advance these principles of environmental justice.
6. Recognizing that the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy people were the first inhabitants and stewards of these lands and waters, achieving environmental justice for all will require a fair arrangement with First Nations concerning the exercise of aboriginal rights and the just implementation of treaties.

For more information about the Campaign for Environmental Justice, contact the Conservation Council of New Brunswick.



Conservation Council
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*New Brunswick's
environmental health
hangs in the balance.*