

October 29, 2025

Hon Gilles LePage

Minister of Environment and Local Government

Hon. Mike Herron

Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development

P.O. Box 6000

Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Subject: Cap Bateau - Peat Mining in a Privately Owned Bog on Lamèque Island

Dear Ministers LePage and Herron,

I am writing to express concern about ongoing and proposed peat mining activities in privately owned bogs across New Brunswick. While I recognize that peat extraction supports local employment and contributes to the provincial economy, this practice's environmental and climate consequences require stronger oversight and coordinated action between your departments.

Peatlands are among the most valuable natural ecosystems in New Brunswick. They provide critical habitat, regulate water flow, and act as long-term carbon sinks, storing thousands of years' worth of accumulated carbon. Significant greenhouse gas emissions are released when these bogs are drained or disturbed for peat extraction, undermining the province's climate change mitigation efforts and biodiversity goals.

As Inger Anderson, Director of the IUCN, indicates:

"Peatlands are among the most valuable ecosystems on Earth and a stark example of how important our natural environment is to our wellbeing. Occupying just 3% of the Earth's land surface, peatlands are our largest carbon store on land. They are places where people derive clean water and food, and can act as buffers for environmental disasters, such as flooding. They are also of global significance for biodiversity with the majority of peatland species and habitats rare, threatened or declining."

<https://www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/about-peatlands/peatland-benefits>

Academics, conservationists, and governments promote peatlands as nature-based solutions to climate change. We suggest that both departments (DERD and DELG) consider how peat mining may be counterproductive to reaching climate change mitigation goals in New Brunswick.

I understand that peat mining on private lands is subject to limited environmental assessment and minimal public review. This lack of transparency raises concerns about cumulative ecological impacts and the adequacy of current land-use planning and monitoring.

In this context, I am writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed peat harvesting project by Scotts Canada at the Cap Bateau Bog near the village of Cap Bateau on Lamèque

Island. We were made aware of this project by local residents in the area who have expressed their deep concerns regarding the detrimental environmental impacts this project may bring.

The Cap Bateau Bog, approximately 110 hectares, is one of the last remaining peatlands on Lamèque Island. With an estimated 75–80% of the island's bogs already harvested, this wetland represents a rare and irreplaceable remnant of the island's natural landscape. Its ecological functions — water filtration, carbon storage, and wildlife habitat — are too valuable to lose.

At the public meeting held on October 1, 2025, residents made clear that they do not support the proposed harvesting. They raised concerns around impacts on wells/groundwater, air quality, and climate impacts.

The Cap Bateau Bog is one of the last opportunities to preserve an unharvested peatland on Lamèque Island. Rather than authorizing its industrial exploitation, the Government of New Brunswick should prioritize its protection — following the example of the conserved bogs on nearby Miscou Island.

I respectfully urge your department to **reject Scotts Canada's proposed harvesting plan** for the Cap Bateau Bog and to consider measures that would formally protect this site as part of the province's ongoing efforts to conserve coastal and wetland ecosystems. Safeguarding this bog aligns with community values and the province's climate and biodiversity goals, ensuring a healthier and more resilient future for New Brunswick's coasts.

New Brunswick can demonstrate leadership in nature-based climate solutions and environmental sustainability by strengthening peatland protection and management. I encourage your departments to work together to ensure that peatland conservation is fully integrated into the province's climate and land-use planning frameworks.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing efforts to protect New Brunswick's natural environment for future generations.

Sincerely,

Marieka Chaplin

Marieka Chaplin
Freshwater and Forest Conservation Director

References:

Strack, M., Davidson, S.J., Hirano, T. et al. 2022. The Potential of Peatlands as Nature-Based Climate Solutions. *Curr Clim Change Rep* 8, 71–82.