



Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

An Overview



Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

An Overview

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca

December 2003

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Guide Overview

Purpose of guide

This guide has been prepared by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) to provide introductory information on:

- the fundamentals of environmental assessment and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (the Act);
- the types of environmental assessments used by the federal government;
- the role of the public in federal environmental assessment; and
- the role of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.

This guide also provides references to the Agency's related guidance, which provides more detailed information on specific topics discussed in this document.

Intended users of guide

This guide is intended for individuals who are not yet familiar with the federal environmental assessment process or the Act.

Contents of guide

This guide contains the following main parts:

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Disclaimer

This guide is intended for information purposes only. It is not a substitute for the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, or any of its regulations. In the event of any inconsistency between this guide and the Act or regulations, the latter would prevail.

Additional guidance

If you would like further advice or information about the topics covered in this document, please visit the [Agency's Web site \(www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca\)](http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca) or contact the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency office](#) nearest you.

Part 1. Introduction to Federal Environmental Assessment

**Purpose of
Part 1**

Part 1 of this guide provides an introduction to:

- the fundamentals of environmental assessment;
 - the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*; and
 - when the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* applies.
-

**Contents of
Part 1**

Part 1 contains the following sections:

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1.1 What Is Environmental Assessment?

What is environmental assessment?

In general, environmental assessment is a process to predict the environmental effects of proposed initiatives before they are carried out.

An environmental assessment:

- identifies possible environmental effects;
 - proposes measures to mitigate adverse effects; and
 - predicts whether there will be significant adverse environmental effects, even after the mitigation is implemented.
-

What is the purpose of environmental assessment?

There are two main purposes of environmental assessment. These are to:

- minimize or avoid adverse environmental effects before they occur; and
 - incorporate environmental factors into decision making.
-

When are environmental assessments undertaken?

Environmental assessment should be conducted as early as possible in the planning and proposal stages of a project for the analysis to be valuable to decision makers and to incorporate the mitigative measures into the proposed plans.

Benefits of environmental assessment

Timely and efficient environmental assessments result in more informed decision making that is supportive of sustainable development.

By considering environmental effects and mitigation early in the project planning cycle, environmental assessment can have many benefits, such as:

- an opportunity for public participation;
 - increased protection of human health;
 - the sustainable use of natural resources;
 - reduced project costs and delays;
 - minimized risks of environmental disasters; and
 - increased government accountability.
-

Environmental assessments are not ...

Other environmental studies are often confused with environmental assessment.

Environmental assessments are not ...

- [environmental site assessments](#) that are used to identify the nature and extent of contaminants on a specific site; or
 - [environmental audits](#) that are used to evaluate the environmental management and regulatory compliance of a specific operation.
-

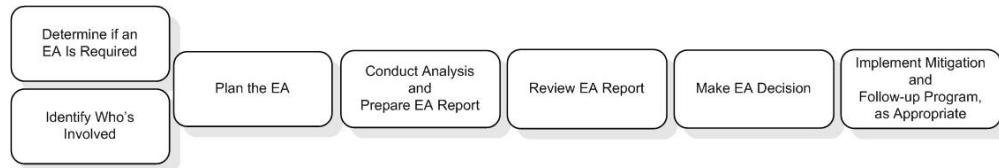
1.1.1 What Are the Main Phases in Environmental Assessment?

Main phases in environmental assessment

Environmental assessment processes and requirements vary around the world; however, most follow the same key principles. In most cases, there are many important phases before and after the actual analysis that identifies the possible environmental effects and mitigative measures.

Figure 1 identifies the key phases of a typical environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. Although shown in a linear diagram, the phases may be revisited during an environmental assessment.

Figure 1: Main Phases in Environmental Assessment (EA)



Summary of each phase

The following table briefly summarizes each phase.

| Phase | Action |
|---|--|
| 1. Determine if an environmental assessment is required | A federal authority determines whether it has a responsibility to ensure that an environmental assessment is conducted. |
| 2. Identify who's involved | The responsible party, called a <u>responsible authority</u> , notifies other federal parties to determine whether they may have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsibilities to ensure the conduct of an environmental assessment; or expert information to contribute. |
| 3. Plan the environmental assessment | Responsible authority(ies) determine how the environmental assessment will be conducted. For example, they identify the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> scope of the proposed project; scope of the factors that must be considered in the environmental assessment; assessor; and time lines. |

1.1.1 What Are the Main Phases in Environmental Assessment?

| | |
|---|--|
| 4. Conduct the analysis and prepare the environmental assessment report | One or more qualified environmental assessment practitioner(s) identifies the potential environmental effects and measures to mitigate those effects. The findings are presented in a written report. |
| 5. Review the environmental assessment report | The responsible authority(ies) reviews the report for adequacy and accuracy, and may have others review the report as well. |
| 6. Make the environmental assessment decision | Based on the findings of the report, the responsible authority(ies) decides whether adverse environmental effects are likely to be significant. This decision is taken into account when determining whether the proposed project should proceed. |
| 7. Implement mitigation and follow-up program, as appropriate | If the proposal is to be carried out, the mitigation measures identified in the report are incorporated into the design plans and implemented with the project. Where required or appropriate, a follow-up program is also designed and implemented to verify that the environmental assessment was accurate and the mitigative measures were effective. |

1.2 What is the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*?

What is the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*?

The [*Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*](#) is the legal basis for the federal environmental assessment process.

The Act sets out the responsibilities and procedures for carrying out the environmental assessments of projects which involve federal government decision making.

What are the Regulations?

A number of [regulations](#) have been established under the Act. Some are essential to the functioning of the Act. Other regulations apply in special circumstances.

The four essential regulations are the:

- [Inclusion List Regulations](#);
 - [Law List Regulations](#);
 - [Exclusion List Regulations](#); and
 - [Comprehensive Study List Regulations](#).
-

Guiding principles

The Act is founded on the following guiding principles:

- to achieve sustainable development by promoting high quality environmental assessment;
 - to integrate environmental factors into planning and decision-making processes;
 - to anticipate and prevent degradation of environmental quality; and
 - to facilitate public participation in the environmental assessment of projects where the federal government is involved.
-

Project vs. strategic environmental assessment

The Act applies only to proposed [projects](#).

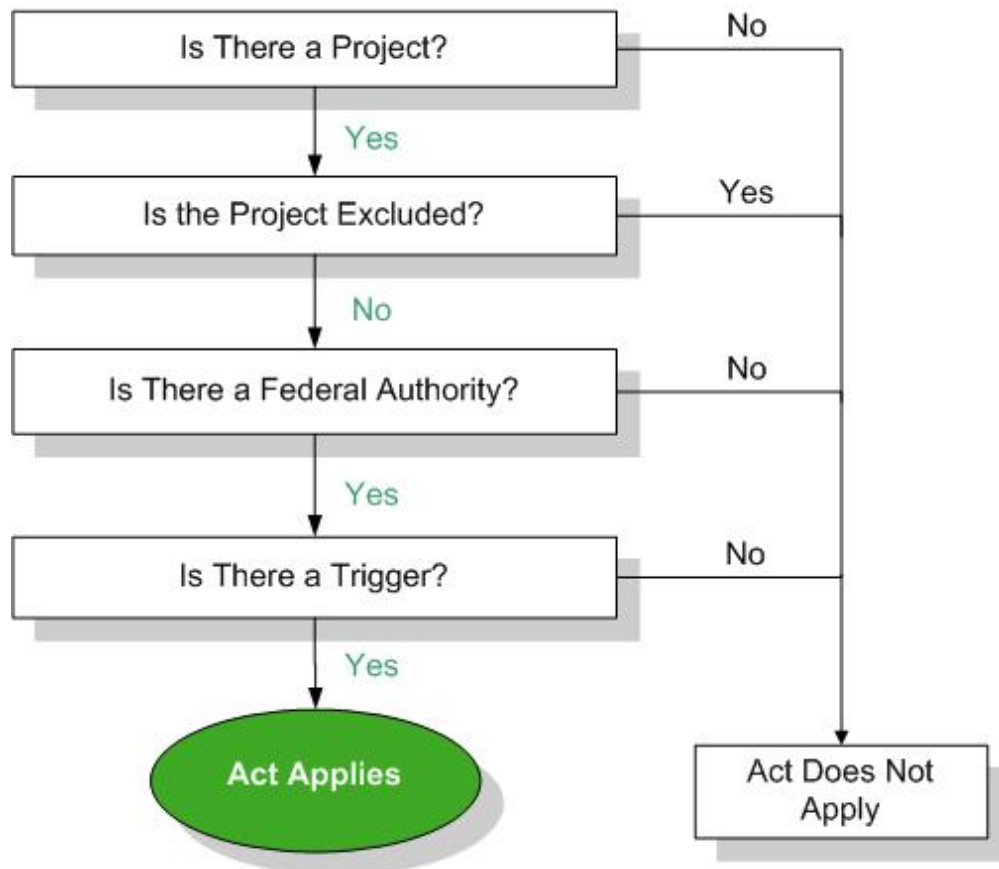
[Strategic environmental assessment](#) is used to assess the environmental effects of proposed federal government policies, plans and programs. While it is not legislated, there is a [Cabinet directive](#) for its conduct.

1.3 When Does the Act Apply?

Decision chart for determining if the Act applies

There are four questions to answer when determining whether an environmental assessment is required under the Act. The four questions should be addressed in sequence. Each question is further discussed below Figure 2.

Figure 2: Determining if the Act Applies



What is a project?

A project can be either:

- an [undertaking](#) in relation to a [physical work](#); or
 - an undertaking not related to a physical work which is described in the [Inclusion List Regulations](#).
-

Can a project be excluded?

A project may be exempted from an environmental assessment if it:

- is described in the [Exclusion List Regulations](#);
 - is in response to a national emergency for which special temporary measures are being taken under the [Emergencies Act](#); or
 - is in response to an emergency and the project is in the interest of preventing damage to property or the environment or is in the interest of public health or safety.
-

What is a federal authority?

In the context of the Act, the term [federal authority](#) refers to a federal body (e.g., a department or agency) that may have expertise or a mandate relevant to a proposed project.

Ministers, departments, departmental corporations and agencies of the Government of Canada are federal authorities. Other bodies created by statute and accountable through a minister to Parliament can also be prescribed as a federal authority.

What is a trigger?

The federal environmental assessment process is applied whenever a federal authority has a specified decision-making responsibility in relation to a project, also known as a “trigger” for an environmental assessment.

Specifically, the Act is “triggered” when a federal authority:

- proposes a project;
 - provides financial assistance to a proponent to enable a project to be carried out;
 - sells, leases, or otherwise transfers control or administration of federal land to enable a project to be carried out; or
 - provides a licence, permit or an approval that is listed in the [Law List Regulations](#) that enables a project to be carried out.
-

Are there any other reasons for carrying out an environmental assessment?

If a project does not involve any of the “triggers” to the Act, an environmental assessment under the Act may still be possible.

If the Minister of the Environment considers that the project has the potential to cause significant adverse environmental effects across boundaries between non-federal and [federal lands](#), or across provincial or international boundaries, then the Minister has the discretion to require an assessment of the transboundary effects in some circumstances.

Part 2. Introduction to the Four Types of Environmental Assessment

Purpose of Part 2 Part 2 of this guide provides an introduction to the types of environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (the Act).

Contents of Part 2 This part contains the following sections:

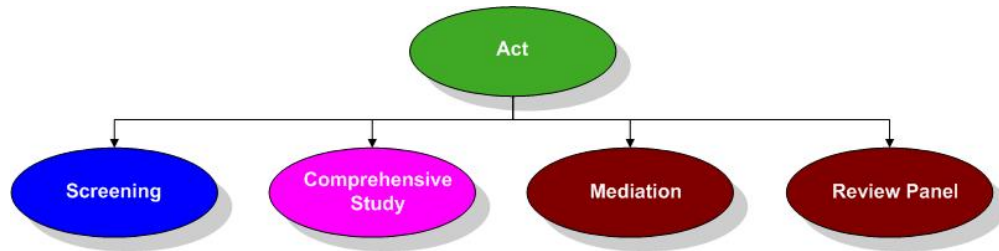
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2.1 What Are the Four Types of Environmental Assessment?

Four environmental assessment types

The Act describes different types of environmental assessment that may be required.

Figure 3: Four Environmental Assessment Types



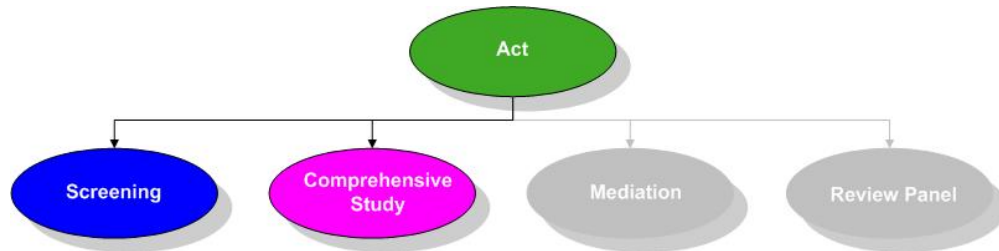
Self-directed assessments

Self-directed assessments are those undertaken by a responsible authority with respect to a project.

Types of self-directed environmental assessments

Self-directed assessments are either screenings or comprehensive studies.

Figure 4: Self-directed Environmental Assessments



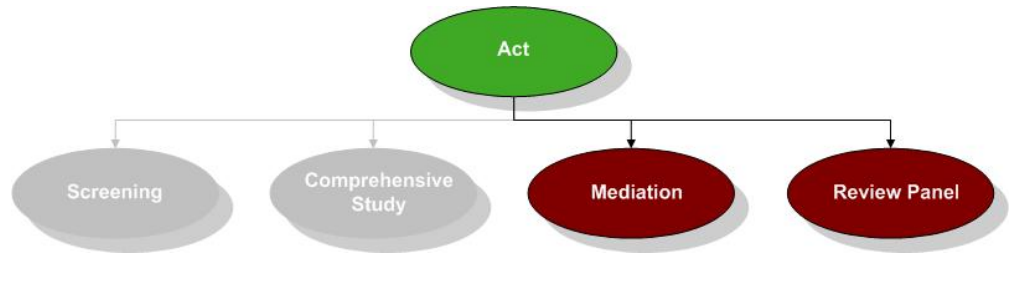
Independent assessments

Independent assessments are those conducted by a mediator or a review panel appointed by the Minister of the Environment. The assessment is conducted independently from government. On completion of the assessment, a report with conclusions and recommendations is prepared for the Minister of the Environment and the responsible authority. The government then makes the final decision about whether to take action that enables the project to proceed.

Types of independent environmental assessments

Independent assessments are either [mediations](#) or [assessments by a review panel](#).

Figure 5: Independent Environmental Assessments



When are projects referred to an independent environmental assessment?

A project is referred to a mediator or a review panel when:

- there is uncertainty whether the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects;
- the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects and there is uncertainty whether these effects are justified in the circumstances; or
- public concerns warrant it.

A project can be referred to a mediator or review panel at any time during a screening or during the first phase of a comprehensive study.

In some circumstances, the Minister of the Environment also has the discretion to require a review by a mediator or a review panel where he/she considers a project may result in significant adverse transboundary effects across federal and non-federal lands, provincial or international boundaries.

2.2 Screening

What is a screening?

A screening is a systematic approach to identifying and documenting the environmental effects of a proposed project and determining the need to eliminate or minimize (mitigate) the adverse effects, to modify the project plan or to recommend further assessment through mediation or an assessment by a review panel.

Screenings are used to assess a wide range of projects. Screenings will vary in time, length and depth of analysis, depending on the circumstances of the proposed project, the existing environment, and the likely environmental effects. Some screenings may require only a brief analysis of the available information and a brief report; others may need new background studies and will be more thorough and rigorous.

The responsible authority must ensure that the screening of the project is carried out. The responsible authority must then prepare or ensure the preparation of a report which summarizes the findings of the screening.

What happens after a screening?

A responsible authority must determine the significance of the environmental effects of the project. This in turn governs whether the responsible authority can take action that will enable the project to proceed (i.e., whether to proceed with the project itself when it is the proponent, or otherwise to provide the funding, land interest, permit or other authorization).

If the responsible authority determines that it may take action that enables a project to proceed, it must implement mitigation and consider whether a [follow-up program](#) is appropriate or required. Under the Act, a follow-up program verifies the accuracy of the environmental assessment and/or determines the effectiveness of any mitigation measures that have been implemented.

If the screening has identified the need for further review, the responsible authority must ask the Minister of the Environment to refer the project to a mediator or a review panel.

Further review is necessary when:

- it is uncertain whether the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects; or
- the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects and it is uncertain whether these effects are justified in the circumstances; or
- public concerns warrant it.

However, the responsible authority cannot take any action that enables the project to proceed, if the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects (taking into account any appropriate mitigation measures) that cannot be justified in the circumstances.

How can I get involved in a screening?

If you are concerned about a project in your area, you can consult the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry](#) to determine if an environmental assessment is underway.

Public participation in a screening is at the discretion of the responsible authority and depends on factors such as the nature of the project, its environmental setting and public concerns.

If the responsible authority decides to solicit public input as part of the environmental assessment, this input will be taken into consideration when the responsible authority decides the next step in the environmental assessment process.

Where the responsible authority has determined that public participation is appropriate, it must provide an opportunity for the public to examine and comment on the screening report.

Want additional information?

For additional information on how screenings are conducted, please see the guide entitled [Screenings](#).

2.2.1 Class Screening

What is a class screening?

The class screening is a special type of screening that can help streamline the environmental assessment of certain types of projects.

The Agency has determined that these types of projects are not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects, providing that the design standards and [mitigation measures](#) described in the class screening report are applied.

Two types of class screening

There are two types of class screening.

- A [model class screening](#) provides a generic assessment of all projects within a class. The responsible authority uses information contained in a model report and prepares individual screening reports for projects within the class to account for location-specific or project-specific information. Information relating to these assessments is accessible through the registry, and a statement of projects that use a model class screening report will be posted on, at least, a quarterly basis. The Agency declares model class screening reports.
 - A [replacement class screening](#) provides a generic assessment of all projects within a class. No location-specific or project-specific information is needed, so the responsible authority does not need to prepare project-specific screening reports for projects covered by the replacement class. A statement of projects to which replacement class screenings have been applied is listed on the registry. The Agency declares replacement class screening reports.
-

How can I get involved in a class screening?

Before a report is designated as a class screening report by the Agency, the public must be notified and given an opportunity to comment on the class screening report. The Agency must then take the public comments into account in making a decision on the designation.

Want additional information?

For additional information on how class screenings are utilized, please contact the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency office](#) nearest you.

2.3 Comprehensive Study

What is a comprehensive study?

The majority of federal projects are assessed through a screening; however, some projects require a comprehensive study. These projects are described in the [Comprehensive Study List Regulations](#). These tend to be large projects having the potential for significant adverse environmental effects. They may also generate public concerns.

Examples of such projects include large oil and natural gas developments, certain projects in national parks, nuclear power developments, major electrical-generation projects, substantial industrial plants and others.

Minister's track decision in comprehensive studies

Early on in the comprehensive study, the Minister of the Environment has to decide whether the project should continue to be assessed through a comprehensive study, or whether it should be referred to a mediator or review panel. If the Minister decides that the project should continue as a comprehensive study, the project can no longer be referred to a mediator or review panel.

What happens after a comprehensive study?

The Minister of the Environment issues an environmental assessment decision statement. The decision statement includes the Minister's opinion about the significance of the environmental effects of the project and sets out any mitigation measures or follow-up program the Minister considers appropriate.

The Minister of the Environment also has the power to request additional information, or that public concerns be addressed before issuing the environmental assessment decision statement. Once the environmental assessment decision statement is issued, the Minister refers the project back to the responsible authority for action.

How can I get involved in a comprehensive study?

As with a screening, if you are concerned about a project in your area, you can consult the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry](#) to determine if an environmental assessment is underway. If so, you may then contact the [responsible authority](#) identified.

The responsible authority must provide opportunities for public participation throughout the comprehensive study. Early in the process, you have an opportunity to express your views about the type of assessment that is appropriate in the circumstances, and these views are taken into account when the Minister of the Environment decides whether the project should proceed as a comprehensive study or be referred to a mediator or review panel.

You also have an opportunity to participate in the conduct of the comprehensive study and to review the comprehensive study report before any decisions are made on the project. [Funding](#) is available to assist you to participate in a comprehensive study.

Want additional information?

For additional information on how comprehensive studies are conducted, please see the guide entitled [Comprehensive Studies](#).

For additional information on the Participant Funding Program, please see the guide entitled [Participant Funding Program](#).

2.4 Mediation

What is a mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary process of negotiation in which an independent and impartial mediator helps interested parties resolve their issues. The mediator is appointed by the Minister of the Environment after consulting with the responsible authority and the interested parties.

Mediation can be used to address all issues that arise in a project's environmental assessment or it can be used in combination with an assessment by a review panel. For example, it may support a panel by bringing the parties together to resolve specific questions, such as the determination of the most effective mitigation measures.

Mediation can produce many benefits. It can be sensitive to local concerns and be less costly and time consuming than an assessment by a review panel. Participants may also gain a sense of having contributed to the resolution of a problem.

Mediation is an appropriate option when the interested parties are willing to participate and a consensus seems possible. It is particularly effective where there are only a few interested parties and the issues are limited in scope and number.

What happens to a project after a mediation?

Regardless of whether the mediation successfully resolves the issues under negotiation, the mediator must prepare a report to the responsible authority and the Minister of the Environment, who then makes it public. Once the report has been submitted, the work of the mediator is complete.

The responsible authority must take the mediator's report into consideration before making any decision with regard to the project. It must also respond to the report, with the approval of Cabinet.

How can I get involved in a mediation?

Individuals and organizations having a direct interest in, or directly affected by, a proposed project would be involved in the mediation. A public information program, in which the general public is kept informed of the progress of talks, would form part of the mediation process. Financial assistance is available to participants in a mediation.

Want additional information?

For additional information on how mediation is utilized, please contact the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency office](#) nearest you.

2.5 Assessment by a Review Panel

What is an assessment by a review panel?

A review panel is a group of experts selected on the basis of their knowledge and expertise and appointed by the Minister of the Environment. The Minister also appoints one of the panel members as chairperson.

A review panel is appointed to review and assess, in an impartial and objective manner, a project with likely significant adverse environmental effects. A review panel may also be appointed where public concerns warrant it. Such projects may be referred by the responsible authority to the Minister of the Environment. Only the Minister of the Environment may order an assessment by a review panel.

A review panel submits its recommendations to the Minister of the Environment and to the responsible authority.

Review panels have the unique capacity to encourage an open discussion and exchange of views. They inform and involve large numbers of interested groups and members of the public by allowing individuals to present evidence, concerns and recommendations at public hearings. A review panel allows the proponent to present the project to the public and explain the projected environmental effects. It also provides opportunity for the public to hear the views of government experts about the project.

What is a joint review panel?

When a project requires a decision from another level of government and the federal government, they may choose to conduct the assessment through a joint review panel to save time and money.

The government has developed [harmonization agreements](#) with some provinces to facilitate such reviews.

What happens to a project after an assessment by a review panel?

After a review panel has completed the public hearings and its analysis, it must prepare an environmental assessment report which summarizes its rationale, conclusions and recommendations, and includes a summary of comments received from the public. This report is submitted to the responsible authority and the Minister of the Environment who then makes it public.

The responsible authority must take the review panel's report into consideration before making any decision with regard to the project. It must also respond to the report, with the approval of Cabinet.

How can I get involved in a review panel?

In assessments by review panels, you may participate in scoping meetings to identify issues that need to be addressed. There are also opportunities later in the process to appear before the review panel in public hearings to present your evidence, concerns and recommendations. [Funding](#) is available to assist you to participate in an assessment by a review panel.

These opportunities are posted on the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry](#).

Want additional information?

For additional information on how assessments by a review panel are conducted, please see the guide entitled [Procedures for an Assessment by a Review Panel](#).

For additional information on the Participant Funding Program, please see the guide entitled [Participant Funding Program](#).

Part 3. Introduction to Public Participation in the Process

**Purpose of
Part 3**

Part 3 of this guide provides an introduction to:

- public participation;
 - the Participant Funding Program; and
 - the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry.
-

**Contents of
Part 3**

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3.1 How Can the Public Participate?

Public participation

Public participation is an important element of an environmental assessment process. It strengthens the quality and credibility of environmental assessments. The public is an important source of local and traditional knowledge about a proposed project's physical site and likely environmental effects.

Through public participation activities, project proponents can obtain information, better understand and respond to public concerns, and inform people about decisions.

Who is the public?

The public represents many interests, including:

- local residents;
 - Aboriginal persons;
 - local and regional government officials;
 - community organizations;
 - small business owners;
 - educational institutions;
 - public interest groups; and
 - the media.
-

How does the Agency encourage public participation?

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency encourages public participation in a number of ways, including:

- working with federal departments and project proponents on effective approaches to involving the public;
 - ensuring the public has an opportunity to comment on proposed class screenings and comprehensive study reports;
 - providing [funds](#) to interested groups to assist their participation in comprehensive studies, mediations and review panels; and
 - advising federal departments on how to create and maintain a public registry (see below) containing records relating to environmental assessments.
-

3.2 What Is the Participant Funding Program?

Overview of the participant funding program

The Participant Funding Program was created to help concerned citizens and organizations participate in the environmental assessment of projects being assessed by a comprehensive study, mediator or review panel. The funding program is administered by the Agency.

The work to be funded must relate directly to the environmental assessment of the project in question, and should provide the environmental assessment with new information not presented by the proponent or other participants.

Allocation of funds

Each comprehensive study, mediation or assessment by a review panel receives a certain allocation of money from the program. A Funding Review Committee, independent of the mediator, review panel and proponent, is established for each environmental assessment. The Committee reviews applications for funding and makes recommendations to the Agency. The President of the Agency reviews the recommendations and announces the allocation.

Want additional information?

For additional information on the Program, please see the guide entitled [*Participant Funding Program*](#).

3.3 What Is the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry?

Overview of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry

The [Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry](#) (the Registry) is a government-wide mechanism to facilitate public access to records related to environmental assessments conducted under the Act.

The Registry's two components

The Registry consists of two complementary components:

- The [Internet site](#), administered by the Agency, contains key information about environmental assessments conducted under the Act. A responsible authority or the Agency contributes specific records relating to an environmental assessment to the site.
 - The [project file](#) is a paper file maintained by a responsible authority or the Agency during an environmental assessment. It includes all records produced, collected or submitted with respect to the environmental assessment of the project (including all records included on the Registry's Internet site). Copies of these records are available to the public on request.
-

What kind of records can be found in the Registry?

Every environmental assessment's project file must include all records produced, collected or submitted with respect to the environmental assessment of the project, including:

- all records included in the Internet site for the environmental assessment;
- reports related to the environmental assessment, such as background technical reports and the environmental assessment report;
- comments filed by the public with respect to the environmental assessment;
- records relating to the need for, design of or implementation of any follow-up program; and
- records requiring mitigation measures to be implemented.

Note: In some cases, records or parts of records may be excluded to comply with the [Privacy Act](#) and the [Access to Information Act](#).

**How can I
access the
information?**

Public access to the Registry's Internet site is available through the [Agency's](#) Web site at www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/index_e.cfm.

Part 4. Introduction to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

Purpose of Part 4 Part 4 of this guide provides an introduction to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency).

Contents of Part 4 This part contains the following sections:

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4.1 What Is the Role of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency?

What is the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency?

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency is a federal organization that reports, through a President, to the Minister of the Environment. The Agency operates independently from any other federal department or agency.

The Act established the Agency to administer the federal environmental assessment process and to promote policies and practices.

Objectives of the Agency

The Act gives the Agency specific objectives under [section 62](#). Many of these are supported by specific duties or powers given to the Agency under [subsections 63\(1\) and 63\(2\)](#) of the Act.

The Agency's objectives fall into the following main categories, each of which is described below.

- [Administration](#)
 - [Coordination](#)
 - [Research and development](#)
 - [Compliance and quality assurance](#)
 - [Public participation](#)
 - [Aboriginal peoples](#)
-

Administration

The Agency has an objective to administer the environmental assessment process and any other requirements and procedures established by the Act or its regulations. An example of this administrative role is the Agency's provision of administrative support for mediators and review panels.

Coordination

The Agency has a role to negotiate agreements with other jurisdictions to promote harmonization and efficiency in the assessment of environmental effects, and to avoid duplicative environmental assessments.

The Agency also has a role to act as the federal environmental assessment coordinator if a project is subject to a multi-jurisdictional environmental assessment or a comprehensive study.

If requested, the Agency may also assist parties in building consensus and resolving disputes.

Research and development

The Agency has an objective to support research in matters of environmental assessment. Likewise, the Agency has a role to encourage the development of environmental assessment techniques and practices, alone or in cooperation with other agencies or organizations.

Compliance and quality assurance

The Agency has the objectives to promote environmental assessment in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of the Act and to promote, monitor and facilitate compliance with the Act and its regulations. To support these goals, the Agency provides information and training to facilitate the conduct of environmental assessments.

Similarly, the Agency has a responsibility to promote and monitor the quality of assessments conducted under the Act. In this role, the Agency leads a quality assurance program, and may examine and report on the implementation of the environmental assessment process by responsible authorities.

Public participation

The Agency has an objective to ensure an opportunity for timely public participation in the environmental assessment process. Furthermore, the Agency is responsible for providing opportunities for public participation, and funding for public participation, in comprehensive studies and assessments by review panels.

Additionally, the Agency has a role to maintain the Internet site component of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry, which is accessible to the public.

Aboriginal Peoples

The Agency has an objective to engage in consultation with aboriginal peoples on policy issues related to the Act.

4.2 The Agency's Organization

The Agency's organization

The Agency has six [regional offices](#) and three main headquarter branches which are based in the national capital region.

The main headquarters branches are:

- [Program Delivery](#)
 - [Policy Development](#)
 - [Corporate Services](#)
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Program Delivery

The Program Delivery branch of the Agency manages and administers the environmental assessment process through two divisions.

The Project Assessment division administers the panel review process and the Participant Funding Program, and coordinates and provides technical support for class screening and comprehensive study level assessments.

The Regional Liaison and Guidance division provides procedural advice, training, guidance and co-ordination services to clients across Canada through the Agency's [regional offices](#).

Policy Development

The Policy Development branch of the Agency provides policy advice services to clients regarding the federal environmental assessment process through its two divisions.

The Legislative and Regulatory Affairs division develops new regulations and guidelines under the Act.

The Policy Analysis division assists other federal departments in incorporating environmental assessment into policy, plan and program proposals.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services branch supports the Agency in the attainment of its objective by providing communication, ministerial, finance, human resource and informatics services.

Regional offices The Agency's regional offices offer services, such as training, advice and workshops, to assist in the implementation of the Act.

The regional offices are also involved in the coordination of multi-jurisdictional environmental assessments, comprehensive studies, and assessments by review panels.

They can act as a point of contact with other federal agencies involved in environmental assessment, and they can also consult with provincial and territorial governments to ensure an efficient and timely environmental assessment process.

For services throughout Canada please contact the appropriate Agency [regional office](#) nearest you.

4.2.1 Regional Offices

| Region | Contact |
|---|---|
| British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories & Nunavut | Paul Scott, Director Sinclair Centre, 757 West Hastings Street, Suite 320, Vancouver, BC, V6C 1A1 Telephone: (604) 666-6989 Fax: (604) 666-6990 paul.scott@ceaa-acee.gc.ca |
| Alberta | Lanny Coulson, Director Revillon Building, 10237-104 Street NW, Suite 100, Edmonton, AB T5J 1B1 Telephone: (780) 422-1410 Fax: (780) 422-6202 lanny.coulson@ceaa-acee.gc.ca |
| Saskatchewan, Manitoba | Dan McNaughton, Director 123 Main Street, Suite 263, Winnipeg, MB R3C 4W2 Telephone: (204) 983-5127 Fax: (204) 983-7174 dan.mcnaughton@ceaa-acee.gc.ca |
| Ontario | Louise Knox, Director 55 St-Clair Avenue East, Room 907, Toronto, ON, M4T 1M2 Telephone: (416) 952-1576 Fax: (416) 952-1573 louise.knox@ceaa-acee.gc.ca |
| Quebec | François Boulanger, Director 1141, route de l'Église, Room 204 Postal Box 9514, Sainte-Foy, QC, G1V 4B8 Telephone: (418) 649-6444 Fax: (418) 649-6443 francois.boulanger@ceaa-acee.gc.ca |
| Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island | Bill Coulter, Director 1801 Hollis Street, Suite 200, Halifax, NS B3J 3N4 Telephone: (902) 426-0564 Fax: (902) 426-6550 bill.coulter@ceaa-acee.gc.ca |