

Final Report

Review of the Canada-Ontario Agreement
on the Great Lakes Basic Ecosystem

Canada

 Ontario

 Ogilvie, Ogilvie & Company
a division of mobil-izers limited



v2. 07.19.06



Executive Summary

THE CANADA-ONTARIO AGREEMENT (COA)

In 2002, the Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem was signed by eight federal government Ministers and three Ministers of the provincial government. The Purpose of the five-year COA is to build on the longstanding commitment of the Parties – the first COA was signed in 1971 – to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. The Agreement commits the two governments to continue to work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion with each other and with others in the Basin to achieve the vision of a “healthy, prosperous and sustainable Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem for present and future generations”.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

The 2002 Agreement expires in March, 2007. In the fall of 2005, Canada and Ontario launched a Review to inquire into how the current Agreement has worked and how well it has been implemented. An internal Review Team of Program Coordinators not involved in COA was created to manage this objective Review. An independent consulting firm (Ogilvie, Ogilvie & Company) was retained to design and conduct the Review. The Review included:

- **Survey** of internal and external participants including:
 - Staff from the federal and provincial government departments and ministries that are Parties to the Agreement;
 - Selected staff of environmental and other non-government organizations (NGOs), municipalities, the private sector, academic institutions and others.
- **Analysis** of other agreements and mechanisms with a view to assessing best practices in governance and implementation.
- **Interviews and Focus Groups** – Senior public servants from federal and provincial agencies, academics, and representatives of NGOs were interviewed for their input on the survey findings and their thoughts on implications for the future of the COA. In addition, four focus groups were held with people at both the management and project delivery levels. The range of participants included:
 - senior government managers responsible for COA programs,
 - lake managers,
 - local program coordinators,
 - scientists from all levels of government, and
 - representatives of NGOs that are involved with the Great Lakes.
- **Reporting** – After public consultation to gather comments and feedback on an Interim Report, a Final Report will be submitted to the COA Management Committee.

Overall, close to 200 people gave generously of their time to provide thoughtful comments and advice to inform this report.

THE REVIEW'S FOCUS

In general, the questions put to participants were to learn their views on the following:

- Is the COA making a difference to the Great Lakes Basin environment?
- Does the Purpose of the Agreement continue to make sense in terms of current conditions, needs or problems?
- What are the major challenges and opportunities for improving the effectiveness and/or efficiency of Agreement?
- Are the goals and results clear to the people who are challenged to reach them?
- Do the actions that the governments have agreed to implement help achieve the goals?
- Do the decision-making structures and processes set up under the COA work well?
- Do the Parties to the COA coordinate what they do?
- Do they work well with other partners?
- Are stakeholders satisfied with their involvement?
- How well are the Parties anticipating and responding to change?

This Review did not conduct an evaluation of the outcomes or results of the projects that have been carried out under the auspices of the Agreement since 2002 (i.e. which actions resulted in what outcomes?) The reasons have to do with timing. The COA has a five-year timeline and some of the work will not be completed until next year. But even when the current Agreement expires in 2007, it will be some time before it will be possible to evaluate the outcomes of some of the initiatives carried out during this five-year period.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW

The recommendations in this report are intended to:

- inform the renewal, enhancement and expansion of the Canada-Ontario Agreement on the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem, and
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its implementation.

FINDING 1: Overall, there is strong support for the Agreement and its purpose.

According to responses in the survey, interviews and focus groups, the COA is making a solid contribution to the environment of the Basin ecosystem. However, the responses also clearly identified ways in which the current COA can be improved. Subsequent recommendations deal with a number of ways in which these improvements can be addressed. Recommendation 1 reflects the Review's conclusion that the longstanding partnership of the Parties through COA is one that Canada and Ontario should continue to build upon for the future. Enhancing and expanding the Agreement will make it more effective and efficient in restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATION 1: COA is making a difference to the environment in the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem and should be renewed, enhanced and expanded.

FINDING 2: COA supports delivery of Canada and Ontario's contribution to the Canada-U.S. water quality agreement.

The current Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) is under review in anticipation of a new round of negotiations between Canada and the U.S. The U.S. federal and state governments are reviewing their approach to the negotiations. On the Canadian side, aligning the review of COA with the GLWQA review is essential. Based on the advice, particularly from the provincial side, to be proactive, this Review recommends starting now to develop a Canada-Ontario strategy to inform the GLWQA process.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The renewal of COA should inform the current renegotiation process for the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

FINDING 3: A Canada-Ontario Great Lakes Basin strategy to drive long-term change is lacking.

Comments received during the Review centred on the need for a Canada-Ontario strategy to provide overall direction and drive change faster and more comprehensively in the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. There are already a number of strategic plans that relate to particular aspects of Great Lakes environmental management. But there is no strategy that comprehensively looks at how environmental issues are being managed by Canada and Ontario in the Great Lakes Basin. The Review concluded that such a strategy is needed to pull all the threads together.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Canada and Ontario should develop a comprehensive environmental strategy for the Great Lakes Basin prior to or as part of the process to reach a new Agreement.

FINDING 4: Several agencies with a direct stake in outcomes of COA are not included as Parties to the Agreement.

The responses suggest that the COA should be expanded to bring government departments and ministries concerned with major issues affecting Great Lakes Basin sustainability into the Agreement. Other agencies involved with infrastructure (federal and provincial) and human health should be at the table to help inform this strategy and align it with strategic plans within their own mandates. Their participation in the COA is crucial to achieving results and also to engaging more stakeholders and a wider public in efforts to restore, protect and conserve the Basin ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Parties to COA should be expanded to include ministries or departments that are involved in managing environmental/sustainability issues in the Great Lakes Basin.

FINDING 5: The current Annexes are too narrow to fulfill the vision and purpose of the COA.

The current COA has four Annexes which specify goals, results and commitments to take action on the part of the two governments. The current Annexes cover cleanup of Areas of Concern (AOCs), Harmful Pollutants, Lakewide Management and Monitoring and Information Management. A persistent theme in the responses was the need to broaden the focus of the Annexes to include the pressures from human development in the Basin and on ecosystem sustainability issues.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Annexes should evolve from a focus on water to a broader focus on the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem and should embrace sustainability to better reflect the vision and purpose of the Agreement.

FINDING 6: The current Annexes do not adequately address major pressures on the Great Lakes.

Participants in this Review were asked to elaborate on challenges and opportunities for improving the Agreement. One of the most common answers was that the COA Annexes should address a range of pressing issues that they do not cover now. Some issues were identified as emerging challenges, while others were considered chronic problems that require concerted and coordinated action. The issues raised warrant consideration for inclusion as Annexes to the new Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The new COA should update existing Annexes to reflect recent progress, and consider adding new Annexes that address urgent and emerging issues affecting the Great Lakes Basin, including (in alphabetical order):

- Agricultural land use
- Biodiversity
- Climate change and other air issues
- Invasive species
- Pharmaceuticals
- Source water protection
- Species at risk
- Urbanization
- Water quantity and basin withdrawals.

FINDING 7: Political responsibility for action on Great Lakes issues is unclear and the public profile is low.

To successfully restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem, Canada and Ontario need to mobilize coordinated action and the support of the people who live, work and play in the Great Lakes Basin. Mobilizing the public is best achieved with strong and visible political leadership. There were comments from the survey and discussions that there is not enough visibility for the issues threatening the ecosystem. There is also little sense of urgency conveyed in public reporting on progress.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Canada and Ontario should publicly profile their shared commitment to a “healthy, prosperous and sustainable” Great Lakes Basin now and in future and should consider options for raising public awareness, such as appointing federal and provincial political co-champions.

FINDING 8: Funding is inadequate to achieve the purpose of the Agreement.

No other point was made as often as the importance of funding to getting results. Resources were mentioned in response to all sorts of different questions. Experience suggests that there are other ways to generate more funding without relying entirely on new allocations from government. It may be possible to leverage private funding from business and industry on the Great Lakes. Some environmental NGOs are successful fund-raisers and have shown willingness to partner with government on projects that help meet their objectives. Reallocation within funding envelopes may also be possible, particularly if the political leadership (see Recommendation 7) places a high priority on the Great Lakes Basin.

RECOMMENDATION 8: It will be necessary to increase the allocations, reallocate, raise or leverage resources from the public and private sectors to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

FINDING 9: Working relationships among the Parties to the COA are generally good. The success of relationships with external stakeholders is uneven.

The COA says the two governments are committed to working in a “cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion, with each other and others in the Basin” to achieve the vision. According to the responses, some stakeholders do not view the relationship with government agencies as particularly strong.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Improving and expanding stakeholder relations should be a priority in the development and implementation of the new Agreement.

FINDING 10: The success of collaboration with local communities and local organizations is mixed.

Internal participants are very aware that governments cannot achieve objectives of the Agreement without the contribution of others. Harnessing the capacities of local communities to take action on environmental priorities under a new COA represents an opportunity. Local organizations can deliver programs in the field, rally public support in their communities, and they may also be able to leverage local financial and human resources to supplement government funding. Providing government support may entail bringing relevant organizations together to discuss collaborative action, communicating the latest research in an understandable format, and providing resources and administrative backup.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Canada and Ontario should consider all possible options to enhance collaboration with local communities and local organizations.

FINDING 11: There is no structure or strategy that engages the broad range of interests in the Great Lakes Basin and brings them into the process.

Part of the management structure for the current COA includes the Great Lakes Innovation Committee (GLIC), which includes stakeholders. GLIC was established to provide advice to the COA Management Committee on innovative initiatives and it has focused its work on urban planning and information. Feedback indicates that the GLIC structure is not considered an effective vehicle, as designed. Its focus and membership are too narrow. The Review concluded that a Public Advisory Committee (PAC) should be established for the COA. Membership and terms of reference for this new Committee will require careful consideration.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Develop a stakeholder engagement strategy including exploring options for enhancing the role of a public advisory committee to promote public engagement and provide policy, strategy and science advice to the decision-making body of the COA.

FINDING 12: Blurring of governance responsibilities with management roles is hindering accountability and hampering implementation.

The COA Management Committee (MC) is co-chaired by one representative from Environment Canada and one from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. It has representatives from all the participating departments and ministries. In addition to GLIC (see Finding 11), the Management Committee established the Annex Implementation Committee (AIC) to coordinate the development and implementation of the work planning process and report on the progress made under the Annexes.

Under the current COA, both governance and management functions are vested in the MC. It is expected to provide strategic direction and is ultimately accountable for implementation of the Agreement (governance), but it is also involved at the level of activities/projects (management – linking governance with the actual work on the ground). The management functions seem to be overwhelming the governance functions. There is confusion, even among those involved, as to who has the lead on what, within the COA.

The governance structure requires adjustment to ensure that the governing body is in a position to provide strategic leadership and accountability, and that management responsibilities are more clearly defined and separated from the governance or “steering” role. In addition, the Review recommends that other governance models be reviewed to see if they might be more appropriate for the COA.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Canada and Ontario should review the governance structure for the COA with a view to:

- **strengthening accountability and public transparency;**
- **clarifying leadership vs. management roles;**
- **ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of implementation.**

A clearer separation of roles between Management Committee, which should provide strategic direction and leadership, and the Annex Implementation Committee (AIC), which should provide management/administration of COA implementation, is a necessary first step to improve governance.

As part of the review, alternative models of governance should be examined to determine if a different structure would work better to achieve the Parties’ vision for the Great Lakes Basin.

FINDING 13: There has been only limited engagement of Aboriginal people in the COA.

There are legal requirements for consultation with Aboriginal people where government initiatives may affect treaty rights. While COA has no legislative authority, and therefore has no direct impact on Aboriginal rights, there is good reason to engage and involve Aboriginal people in the COA in advance of development of a new Agreement and later in implementation. First Nations communities have a unique store of knowledge of the natural history of their lands, and a major stake in the restoration, protection and conservation of that heritage. The Review suggests that discussions include Métis groups, in addition to the First Nations of the Great Lakes Basin.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Canada and Ontario should engage Aboriginal people of the Great Lakes Basin in meaningful discussions about the new COA.

FINDING 14: Canada and Ontario are not paying sufficient attention to the precautionary principle in making decisions about the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

Canada and Ontario have not fully embraced the precautionary principle in the COA. This principle says that full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing action in the face of threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage. Full scientific certainty can take a long time, years or even decades. Good scientific advice that provides evidence of degradation of ecosystems should be acted upon before it is too late. Once the definitive study comes in, there may be no way to retrieve what has been lost.

RECOMMENDATION 14: The new COA should reinforce the precautionary principle.

FINDING 15: Some of the results and commitments in the current COA are too vague, and there is no clear linkage to achievement of the goals.

The current Agreement differs from past COAs in that it establishes, in the Annexes, specific commitments for each government to achieve certain results. This is seen as an improvement over previous Agreements. The commitments are activities that each government will engage in, and they are listed under each result. But some results and commitments are more targeted than others. The Annexes in the new COA will be strengthened and implementation improved by identification of SMART outcomes. SMART stands for:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-bound or time-specific.

Getting there will require a process to come to agreement on what the most important outcomes are. But the time spent on this up-front process will make performance management during the next Agreement more meaningful and will help to ensure progress on Great Lakes Basin issues that are identified as priorities through the strategic plan (Recommendation 3).

RECOMMENDATION 15: The new COA should identify SMART outcomes to focus shared efforts over the next five years.

FINDING 16: COA implementation is tied up in red tape.

The management/administrative system was characterized as cumbersome and confusing. The COA has one Secretariat, with part-time staff, to provide administrative support. It used to have two Secretariats, but they were merged, which seems to have been a popular move. Administrative requirements were criticized as layering on too much overhead. This Review strongly urges creation of a new, streamlined management/administrative system to provide an effective and efficient link between governance and the work being done at the operational level.

RECOMMENDATION 16: A more efficient and effective administrative structure should be put in place, and administrative processes should be streamlined, disentangled and simplified at the operational level. The new administrative system must be aligned with the governance model.

FINDING 17: Decision-makers at all levels are not getting the information they need.

One of the major internal administrative problems is the management of information. Despite the efforts put into internal reporting, information does not seem to be flowing properly, either up or down. Staff do not seem to feel well-informed about decision-making at the top, while there is concern at upper levels that the Management Committee is not getting the kind of information it needs to provide the necessary leadership. Rather than working on information systems in the abstract, the best way to find out what information is needed by whom is to ask decision-makers what they need.

RECOMMENDATION 17: To better inform decision-making at all levels, the flow and coordination of information should be improved. A good starting-point would be to ask decision-makers about the information they need and are not getting.

FINDING 18: The COA is not generating much public interest or support.

Building the public's awareness and enthusiasm for actions to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem will require attention to relations with various publics, including the local groups that are already working hard on cleanup, restoration and other initiatives in their local rivers or on their local lakefronts. There are many different communications approaches that could be taken to headline Great Lakes Basin sustainability. What is carried out will depend at least in part on the resources allocated to the effort.

RECOMMENDATION 18: Canada and Ontario should examine how best to provide information to increase public awareness and promote public participation in decision-making related to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.



Part 1:

Introduction and Background

The current Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem, signed in 2002, expires in March, 2007. In the fall of 2005, Canada and Ontario launched a Review to inquire into how the current Agreement has worked and how well it has been implemented. Background on the COA and the Review are included in Part 1 of this report. Part 2 describes the findings and recommendations of the Review.

1.1 THE GREAT LAKES ARE A SHARED RESOURCE

The Great Lakes are magnificent inland seas. In their basin are large cities with millions of residents, small towns and farm fields, crowded beaches and remote forests, industrial smokestacks and towering rock cliffs. The five lakes – Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie and Ontario – hold about 20 percent of all the surface freshwater in the world and stretch east-west more than 1,200 kilometers. The Great Lakes support a variety of human uses, including drinking water, sewage treatment, shipping, fishing, light and heavy industry, recreation, tourism and power generation.

The Great Lakes Basin, which includes the rivers, lakes and streams draining into the big lakes and the land around them, covers about 775,000 square kilometers. The Basin contains many species of fish, plants and wildlife, some rare, a variety of natural habitats.

The economic, social and environmental interests in the Great Lakes Basin are complex and diverse. So too are the political interests in a lakes system that straddles the border between Canada and the United States. There are two nations, two provinces, eight states, an array of urban and rural municipalities and several First Nations with a direct stake in the Basin.

With all these interests to be recognized and reconciled, getting things done in the Great Lakes Basin has its challenges. This is a shared resource, inhabited by 33 million people and counting. Ensuring that it will still be providing multiple benefits 20 or 50 years from now means that we have to work together today.

For the past 35 years, the governments of Canada and Ontario have cooperated, under a series of formal signed agreements, to restore, protect and conserve the health of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem on the Canadian side of the border. These agreements have provided a vehicle for Canada to fulfill commitments under the Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA).

1.2 THE CANADA-ONTARIO AGREEMENT

The 2002 COA notes that since the first Canada-Ontario agreement was signed in 1971, the work accomplished, along with the efforts of residents of the Great Lakes Basin, have contributed to:

- reducing the amount of pollution that enters the Basin;
- improving and protecting the habitat of fish and wildlife;
- working toward the goal of water that is safe to swim in and to drink; and,
- fostering a sense of stewardship throughout the region for the Basin Ecosystem.

PURPOSE AND VISION

The Purpose of the 2002 five-year Agreement is to build on the longstanding commitment of the Parties to restore, protect and conserve the Basin Ecosystem. It commits the two governments to continue to work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion with each other and with others in the Basin to achieve the vision of a “healthy, prosperous and sustainable Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem for present and future generations”.

PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT

In 2002, the Parties or Signatories to the Agreement on behalf of the Government of Canada were the federal Ministers of the Environment, Agriculture and Agri-Food, Canadian Heritage, Fisheries and Oceans, Health, Natural Resources, Public Works and Government Services, and Transport.

The Parties to this Agreement on behalf of the Government of Ontario were the provincial Ministers of the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

To achieve the vision, the COA sets out:

- Principles to guide the delivery of programs and initiatives (See next box);
- Annexes to describe the Parties’ response to specific issues, and
- Administrative and management structures and processes for implementation.

ANNEXES INCLUDE JOINT AND SEPARATE COMMITMENTS

The four Annexes to the Agreement specify goals and anticipated results and list the actions that have been agreed upon by the Parties. There are both joint and separate commitments by the two governments (Canada will... Ontario will...) for activities to achieve the results. The Annexes encourage collaboration with other levels of government, organizations and Basin

residents and information-sharing and knowledge-building. The four Annexes cover:

- Areas of Concern (AOCs) – cleanup of these locations where environmental quality is degraded and beneficial uses as defined in the GLWQA are impaired;
- Harmful Pollutants – virtual elimination of persistent bioaccumulative toxic substances and significant reduction of other harmful substances within the Basin;
- Lakewide Management – a series of initiatives to address lake-specific ecological problems;
- Monitoring and Information Management – including coordinated federal-provincial scientific monitoring and systematic tracking of environmental change and progress.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Agreement provides for a Management Committee, co-chaired by one representative from Environment Canada and one from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. The Management Committee, which has representatives from all the participating departments and ministries, is responsible for implementation of the Agreement. The Management Committee established two committees to report to it.

- The Annex Implementation Committee (AIC) coordinates the development and implementation of the work planning process and reports on the progress made under all four Annexes. The AIC has established four task forces to address specific issues, with the eight federal departments and three provincial ministries that are Parties to the Agreement taking leading or supporting roles in meeting responsibilities for the 181 commitments under the Annexes.
- The Great Lakes Innovation Committee (GLIC) was created to improve cooperation and coordination between governments and interested parties. It includes representatives from municipalities, academia, forestry, fisheries, public health, conservation, industry, and environmental and other interested organizations. The GLIC is mandated to bring innovative approaches to overcoming barriers and take advantage of opportunities to make progress on the COA goals and results.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

There were two Secretariats established to provide staff support (part-time) to the Management Committee and to the Annex Implementation Committee. In 2005, the Secretariats were merged into one, which has a staff member from Environment Canada and a staff member from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. COA is a part-time work assignment, in addition to other job responsibilities, for both Secretariat staff and Committee members.

COA PRINCIPLES

Accountability – to remain accountable to citizens, the Parties must establish clear commitments in relation to agreed upon goals and objectives for this Agreement and regularly report on progress in relation to the achievement of those commitments.

Adaptive Management – openness, continuous learning, innovation, and improvement ensures effective and efficient management of the Agreement.

Conservation – energy, water and other resources should be conserved to sustain the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the Basin Ecosystem.

Ecosystem Approach – the interdependence of land, air, water and living organisms, including humans, and the need to make decisions that will maximize the benefits to the entire Basin Ecosystem.

Free Exchange of Information – data will be collected once, closest to the source, in the most efficient manner possible and will be shared.

Pollution Reduction – control at the source is a fundamental step in restoring the health of the Ecosystem of the Basin and that work will continue towards the virtual elimination of persistent toxic substances and reductions in other contaminants.

Precautionary Principle – where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.

Prevention – anticipate and prevent approach yields maximum environmental benefits and is economically cost effective.

Public and Stakeholder Participation – ensure that the decision making process incorporates consideration of public and stakeholder opinions and advice, and provide the public and stakeholders with meaningful opportunities to consult, to advise and to participate directly in activities that support the Agreement.

Rehabilitation – where environmental quality has been degraded by human activity, restoration will be part of the solution.

Science-Based Management – best available science, research and knowledge shall provide advice in setting management priorities, policies and programs.

Sustainability – social, economic and environmental demands are all considered, to balance the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

1.3 THE REVIEW'S PURPOSE AND PROCESS

The Canada-Ontario Agreement requires a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the Agreement in the fifth year. The COA states:

The review will be completed within six months. The Parties will consult with the public on the review and make public the findings and outcomes of the review 60 days thereafter.

The review must be completed by March 2007. The Management Committee is responsible for the review. The Agreement makes the Management Committee accountable for “conducting ongoing evaluations of the administration and implementation of the Agreement as well as promoting any actions needed for continuous improvement.”

Part of the comprehensive review is an evaluation of the Purpose of the Agreement and of the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative processes established by the Management Committee to fulfill its responsibilities for implementation. According to the Terms of Reference for the Review:

The first step in this evaluation is to gather information and experiences about implementation since 2002 from the Parties, their partners in delivery, and Great Lakes Basin stakeholders. The results would be analyzed and distilled to generate an initial report card on implementation of the current Agreement, which would provide a basis for efforts to develop recommendations for improvement in subsequent agreements.

An internal Review Team of Program Coordinators not involved in COA was created to manage this objective Review. An independent consulting firm (Ogilvie, Ogilvie & Company) was retained to design and conduct the Review.

The Review process included the following:

Survey of Internal and External Participants – A set of questions was designed to solicit information and opinions on COA from a cross-section of participants, including:

- Staff from the federal and provincial government departments and ministries that are Parties to the Agreement (Internal Survey).
- Selected staff of environmental and other non-government organizations (NGOs), municipalities, the private sector, academic institutions and others (External Survey).

The response rate was 52% on the Internal Survey and 46% on the External Survey. A survey software package was used to capture and analyze responses from 63 internal and 42 external participants during December 2005 and January 2006.

Analysis of Other Agreements and Mechanisms – Other international and federal-provincial agreements, as well as evaluations and audits of related programs by Auditors and Environmental Commissioners at both levels of government, were examined with a view to assessing best practices in governance and implementation. This work has provided a further basis for evaluating the current COA and for offering advice to improve the next COA.

Interviews and Focus Groups – In January and February of 2006, about a dozen in-depth interviews were conducted with a cross-section of people who have considerable experience with the COA and in Great Lakes management in general. The interviewees included senior public servants from federal and provincial agencies, academics, and representatives of NGOs. They were asked for their input on the survey findings and their thoughts on implications for the future of the COA.

In addition, four focus groups were held to encourage discussion of the results of the survey and other issues of concern among people involved and engaged at both the management and project delivery levels. Almost 100 people participated in this part of the Review. The range of participants included:

- senior government managers responsible for COA programs,
- lake managers,
- local program coordinators,
- scientists from all levels of government, and
- representatives of NGOs that are involved with the Great Lakes.

There was some overlap among survey respondents and participants in the interviews and focus groups. Overall, close to 200 people gave generously of their time to provide thoughtful comments and advice to inform this report.

Reporting – After public consultation to gather comments and feedback on an Interim Report, a Final Report will be submitted to the COA Management Committee.

Appendices provide more in-depth information on the Review, including:

- Appendix A – The Survey Instrument
- Appendix B – The Survey Data
- Appendix C – Interview and Focus Group Questions
- Appendix D – List of interviewees and other contributors to the Review.
- Appendix E – Summary of research.

FOCUS OF THE REVIEW

In producing this initial report card on the 2002 COA, the Review explored with participants whether they felt the COA partnership is helping to realize the vision of a “healthy, prosperous and sustainable” ecosystem for present and future generations and how a new COA could be made more effective and efficient in reaching desired objectives for the Basin ecosystem.

Participants were asked a series of questions which are documented in the Appendices of this Report. In general, the questions were to learn participants’ views on the following:

- Is the COA making a difference to the Great Lakes Basin environment?
- Does the Purpose of the Agreement continue to make sense in terms of current conditions, needs or problems?
- What are the major challenges and opportunities for improving the effectiveness and/or efficiency of Agreement?
- Are the goals and results clear to the people who are challenged to reach them?
- Do the actions that the governments have agreed to implement help achieve the goals?
- Do the decision-making structures and processes set up under the COA work well?
- Do the Parties to the COA coordinate what they do?
- Do they work well with other partners?
- Are stakeholders satisfied with their involvement?
- How well are the Parties anticipating and responding to change?

This Review did not conduct an evaluation of the outcomes or results of the projects that have been carried out under the auspices of the Agreement since 2002 (i.e. which actions resulted in what outcomes?). The reasons have to do with timing.

The COA has a five-year timeline and some of the work will not be completed until next year. In the meantime, the projects undertaken as part of the commitments under the COA are being tracked by the Annex Implementation Committee, which reports to the Management Committee. A COA Progress Report was issued for 2002-03. A report covering 2004-05 is being prepared.

But even when the current Agreement expires in 2007, it will be some time before it will be possible to evaluate the outcomes of some of the initiatives carried out during this five-year period. It may be several years into the future before the outcomes of a rehabilitation program, for example, take hold in the natural environment.

In examining the implementation of the Agreement, the reviewers felt it was important to distinguish between the role of governance and the role of management or administration. For guidance, the reviewers turned to the Institute on Governance, a non-profit organization promoting good governance in Canada and abroad. It provided the following definitions.

Work: Performing the tasks to fulfill the mission.

Governance: The interface with stakeholders, the source of strategic decisions that shape the organization and its work, and ultimate accountability for the work and actions of the organization.

Management: The link between governance and work. The organization of tasks, people, relationships and technology to get the job done. (Institute on Governance at www.iog.ca)

The Institute notes that, in theory, divisions between these roles are clear; in practice, they tend to become blurred or confused or disappear altogether. “The real danger is not the mixing of these roles, but unclear definition of responsibilities and lost lines of accountability.”

For accountability, the Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector, provided a helpful description in its 1999 report, *Building on Strength*. The Panel defined accountability as: “the requirement to explain and accept responsibility for carrying out an assigned mandate in light of agreed upon expectations. The application of accountability involves:

- taking into consideration the public trust in the exercise of responsibilities;
- providing detailed information showing how responsibilities have been carried out and what outcomes have been achieved; and
- accepting the responsibility for outcomes, including problems created or not corrected by an organization or its official and staff.” (p. 11)

These concepts are discussed further in the relevant context in Part 2 of this report.



Part 2:

Findings and Recommendations

The survey responses and the subsequent discussion, clarification and/or validation of the survey results in interviews and focus groups were analyzed to extract the major findings. Recommendations were then developed, based mainly on the feedback from participants and with an eye to related research.

There is a more extensive description of the information gathered in the Appendices. In reporting on survey responses, percentages do not always add up to 100% because some participants chose not to answer some questions. The choices they were given were strongly agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, strongly disagree, and don't know. Percentages were rounded for the discussion of findings.

Many of the people involved in this Review took the time to provide detailed comments. The quotations that accompany these findings do not reflect the weight of opinion, pro or con, on any one topic. They are intended to illustrate the variety of opinions expressed and to catch some of the flavor of the commentary.

FINDING 1: Overall, there is strong support for the Agreement and its purpose.

The Review began by exploring with participants whether the Agreement has been making a difference to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.

In the survey of internal participants, fully 90% agreed that the COA is making a difference.

Almost 70% said that the goals, results expected and priorities set out in the Agreement are generally understood and shared by the Parties to the Agreement.

Among external participants, a smaller proportion (about 61%) credited the Agreement with making a difference. However, only 18% of them answered in the negative, with the rest saying they didn't know. Asked how they felt about their involvement with the COA, 72% of the external group said their experience was positive.

The generally favourable response on the COA is significant because it indicates that the Agreement is seen as a constructive vehicle that is contributing to a healthy, prosperous and sustainable Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. The overall endorsement of the COA does not mean, however, that Review participants were uncritical. There were many suggestions for improvements in the next COA.

“Without COA, the drivers to make a difference would not exist at senior levels. Progress is being made, but [we] could certainly be doing a better job.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“Our issues are not with the Agreement, but with actions in support of the Agreement.”

FOCUS GROUP

“COA is making a difference, particularly on specific issues which previously had not been adequately addressed/funded.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

Based on responses in the survey, interviews and focus groups that the COA is making a solid contribution to the environment of the Basin ecosystem, the Review concluded that the Agreement should be renewed. However, the responses also clearly identified ways in which the current COA can be improved. Subsequent recommendations in this report deal with a number of ways in which these improvements can be addressed. Recommendation 1 reflects the Review’s conclusion that the longstanding partnership of the Parties through COA is one that Canada and Ontario should continue to build upon for the future. Enhancing and expanding the Agreement will make it more effective and efficient in restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATION 1: COA is making a difference to the environment in the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem and should be renewed, enhanced and expanded.

FINDING 2: COA supports delivery of Canada and Ontario’s contribution to the Canada-U.S. water quality agreement.

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) is also being reviewed in 2006-07, in anticipation of a new round of negotiations between Canada and the United States. More than 80% of internal respondents agreed that the COA supports implementation of the international GLWQA and associated Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) and Lakewide Management Plans (LaMPs). About 58% of the external participants said they consider the COA to be an “effective component” of the efforts by Canada and Ontario to implement the GLWQA, RAPs and LaMPs.

There was recognition of the complexity of managing all the different relationships involved in multiple overlapping agreements at the international, national, provincial, lake and local levels.

One of the challenges for Canada and Ontario will be to articulate how a new COA will relate to an updating of the cross-border agreement.

“We agree that COA provides an effective component of Ontario’s commitments to the implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. We are particularly supportive of Ontario’s approach which has focused on partnerships and ‘on the ground’ activities.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“Canada has not made significant progress, so I assume COA needs to be focused and strengthened and better funded.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“COA renewal is a good opportunity to talk about the Water Quality Agreement negotiation.”

INTERVIEW

The GLWQA is reviewed every six years. The International Joint Commission initiated the latest public review in 2005 under the leadership of the Bi-national Executive Committee (BEC). The BEC review is led by Foreign Affairs in Canada and the State Department in the U.S. An Agreement Review Committee has been established, and Ontario has a representative on it. There are numerous technical and policy working groups reporting to the BEC through the Agreement Review Committee.

The current GLWQA review is to be completed by the fall of 2007. With COA expiring in March of 2007, there is a timing question. Aligning the two processes is essential. One approach would be to wait for the international agreement to be renegotiated. But that would mean losing time and momentum for the COA partners because funding under the Canada-Ontario agreement runs out at the end of fiscal 2006-07. There are already concerns that action and funding taper off in the final year of the COA. Based on the advice, particularly from the provincial side, to be proactive, this Review recommends starting now to develop a Canada-Ontario strategy to inform the GLWQA process. The U.S. federal government and state governments in the Great Lakes Basin are also discussing their approach to the GLWQA review.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The renewal of COA should inform the current renegotiation process for the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

FINDING 3: A Canada-Ontario Great Lakes Basin strategy to drive long-term change is lacking.

Comments received during the Review centred on the need for a Canada-Ontario strategy to provide overall direction and drive change faster and more comprehensively in the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. The need for clearer strategic-level direction and leadership was expressed in different ways. There were concerns expressed, for example, about a perceived lack of vision, a gap between goals and implementation, and fragmentation of effort and resources. There was also impatience with the rate of progress in restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

Developing a strategy would involve a review of the vision, purpose and principles of the existing Agreement and their application. It would involve examining how to make the best use of available resources and linking high-level goals to desired outcomes and actions on the ground. It would provide the basis for a renewed COA, and reinvigorate interest and commitment.

Fairly or not, the lack of strategic direction for the current COA was laid at the feet of the Management Committee (MC), although there were comments indicating that the MC had done the best it could with the Agreement it was handed. There were, one focus group suggested, “growing pains” in moving from a very unstructured Agreement before 2002 to implementing the current, more structured COA.

“Much of COA (2002) was built from the commitments up rather than from the goals/results down. Next COA provides an opportunity to better link each expected result to implementation (how do we achieve it).”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“Strategic thinking is going on in other forums.”

INTERVIEW

“... it does appear in my experience that COA implementation works 90% as a repository of projects and priority actions (i.e., identifies the actions) and only 10% as a driver of actions.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“MC should be focused more on [the] next agreement than on the current one. Should be strategic planning and have [the next agreement’s] strategic focuses ready so renewal proceeds efficiently and effectively.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

There are already a number of strategic plans that relate to particular aspects of Great Lakes environmental management. For example, the international Great Lakes Fishery Commission focuses on management of shared fisheries resources. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) have developed the Great Lakes Conservation Blueprint for Biodiversity, which contributes to Ontario’s Biodiversity Strategy.

However, there is no strategy that comprehensively looks at how environmental issues are being managed by Canada and Ontario in the Great Lakes Basin. The Review concluded that a comprehensive strategy is needed to pull all the threads together. The development of a strategic-level plan could be used as a process to engage partners, especially those who have felt uninvolved in the current COA implementation, in developing the building blocks of a new Agreement. The strategy could be developed prior to or as part of the COA renewal process.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Canada and Ontario should develop a comprehensive environmental strategy for the Great Lakes Basin prior to or as part of a new Agreement.

FINDING 4: Several agencies with a direct stake in outcomes of COA are not included as Parties to the Agreement.

The responses suggest that the COA should be expanded to bring government departments and ministries concerned with major issues affecting Great Lakes Basin sustainability into the Agreement. For example, both governments have departments with responsibility for infrastructure development – Infrastructure Canada (IC) and Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal (MPIR) – because of the importance of infrastructure (e.g., roads, transit, pipelines of various kinds) to economic growth and the need for upgrading and rebuilding of deteriorating systems. These infrastructure agencies are not Parties to the current Agreement.

Neither is the provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, even though municipalities are responsible for their water and sewage systems, and land use is seen as one of the most serious challenges for the Basin ecosystem.

The federal government has representation from Health Canada in the COA, but the Ontario Ministry of Health does not. The fact that public health, which deals with safe drinking water, sanitation and disease transmission, is not at the table was identified in some of the comments received as a major gap.

There was some discussion during the Review about expanding the Parties beyond the two governments. While there was some support for municipalities, Conservation Authorities and NGOs becoming Parties to the COA, there was also resistance to their inclusion. The main reason for not broadening the Agreement in this way seemed to be the prospect of creating an unwieldy group with complex accountabilities that would have grave

difficulty coming to agreement. It was suggested that a better job should be done to involve other stakeholders in an active advisory role, rather than asking them to be signatories.

“[The COA is] pretty comprehensive in the areas that fall under the jurisdiction of EC, MNR and MOE (Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Ontario Ministry of the Environment). Key issues that fall outside these mandates such as land use and infrastructure have not fared as well.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“The agreement touches upon most of the key issues. However, if in 2007 all the Goals were accomplished, the Great Lakes would still be far from restored or protected. Some issues that are not effectively addressed include the impact on water quality of urbanization – land use trends, including source water protection and habitat protection. The Agreement also has difficulty addressing the municipal infrastructure challenge.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

The recommended expansion of the Parties to the COA relates to Recommendation 3 on a comprehensive strategy for the Great Lakes. Other agencies involved with infrastructure (federal, provincial and municipal) and human health should be at the table to help inform this strategy and align it with strategic plans within their own mandates. Their participation in the COA is crucial to achieving results and also to engaging more stakeholders and a wider public in efforts to restore, protect and conserve the Basin ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Parties to COA should be expanded to include ministries or departments that are involved in managing environmental/sustainability issues in the Great Lakes Basin.

FINDING 5: The current Annexes are too narrow to fulfill the vision and purpose of the COA.

Concerns about the narrowness of the Annexes surfaced in answer to more than one question in the survey. For example, 84% of internal respondents and 64% of the external group agreed that the 2002 COA addresses “the key aquatic environmental issues” in the Basin. But even those who thought these issues were adequately addressed offered comments about challenges that do not fit the definition of “aquatic” issues.

“[The challenge is] updating our Great Lakes Program paradigm to meaningfully address key issues such as invasive species, sub-urban sprawl and climate change – we need to make our ‘remedially’ minded program much more pro-active and focused on sustainability.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“At a broad scale, the Agreement covers the main key environmental issues; however, these issues are complex and highly linked to economic development and social factors.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“The Agreement needs to broaden the focus to the Basin as a whole and not just the Areas of Concern (AOCs). An integrated watershed planning approach is appropriate for [a] more meaningful and manageable process.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

The vision for a healthy, prosperous and sustainable Basin ecosystem cannot be achieved unless we address problems in the Basin and on the land that are related to the Agreement’s purpose – to restore, protect and conserve the Basin ecosystem.

The Agreement states clearly that it is concerned with the Great Lakes Basin, not just the Great Lakes waters, but the Annexes do not reflect that perspective very well. They are focused primarily on aquatic issues. In addition, the principle of sustainability, which requires the integration of environmental, economic and social interests, is written into the Agreement, but is not adequately reflected in the Annexes.

Broadening the Annexes to focus clearly on the Basin as a whole, including the pressures from human development, is aligned with Recommendation 4 that the Parties to the Agreement should be expanded. For example, investments in urban infrastructure, like water treatment and stormwater runoff, have key impacts on the Great Lakes. Many participants urged the inclusion of a number of issues, such as urbanization and invasive species, in the Annexes of a new COA. Those issues are addressed in the next section.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Annexes should evolve from a focus on water to a broader focus on the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem and should embrace sustainability to better reflect the vision and purpose of the Agreement.

FINDING 6: The current Annexes do not adequately address major pressures on the Great Lakes.

Participants in this Review were asked to elaborate on challenges and opportunities for improving the Agreement. One of the most common answers was that the COA Annexes should address a range of pressing issues that they do not cover now. Some issues were identified as emerging challenges, while others were considered chronic problems that require concerted and coordinated action. Issues that were raised included:

- pressures from urbanization (roughly 75% of Ontario’s population lives and works in the Basin) and related infrastructure;
- climate change, its impact on the waters and habitat in the Basin, and other air issues;
- maintaining water levels in the Great Lakes, particularly if the resource continues to be depleted;
- source water protection and watershed health;
- invasive species, some of which are overwhelming native species;
- loss of biodiversity and species at risk;
- the accumulation of pharmaceuticals in water supplies;
- agricultural land use.

“Water quantity management especially with respect to the demands likely to come out of the U.S. is the next big issue – and perhaps the most important issue of this millennium.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“Emerging issues are not adequately addressed (pharmaceuticals, invasive species, climate change). Degradation of coastal terrestrial ecosystems need more inclusion as development pressures mount.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“Need more emphasis on looking at climate change, on finding mechanisms to share information among all agencies and partners, and need to start looking at understanding the real impacts of invasives.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“Next COA will need to address source protection, have a strong role for municipalities and look to addressing emerging substances of concern.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

The issues raised warrant consideration for inclusion as Annexes to the new Agreement. Some of the proposed Annexes may be dealt with through other agreements between the federal and provincial governments, or be adequately dealt with under existing Annexes. New Annexes will have to be developed in some order of priority, to be agreed upon by the Parties.

These issues should be explored as part of the strategic planning process for the new COA.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The new COA should update existing Annexes to reflect recent progress, and consider adding new Annexes that address urgent and emerging issues affecting the Great Lakes Basin, including (in alphabetical order):

- Agricultural land use
- Biodiversity
- Climate change and other air issues
- Invasive species
- Pharmaceuticals
- Source water protection
- Species at risk
- Urbanization
- Water quantity and basin withdrawals.

FINDING 7: Political responsibility for action on Great Lakes issues is unclear and the public profile is low.

To successfully restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem, Canada and Ontario need to mobilize coordinated action and the support of the people who live, work and play in the Great Lakes Basin. Mobilizing the public is best achieved with strong and visible political leadership. There were comments from the survey and discussions that there is not enough visibility for the issues threatening the ecosystem. There is also little sense of urgency conveyed in public reporting on progress.

Responsibility is diffused among many departments and ministries in two governments, with the result that there is no clear political leadership for the COA and a relatively low profile. The governments need to signal publicly their renewed commitment to making major progress on sustainable solutions in the Great Lakes Basin.

“Who speaks on behalf of the Great Lakes now?”

FOCUS GROUP

“There is a lack of profile for COA at the highest level of government. The Premier and Prime Minister signal political interest.”

INTERVIEW

“The agreement is an effective means to gain governments’ attention and support for making progress towards a common vision, goals and targets and is an important means to influence bi-national discussions.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

There was a sense from the respondents that scientists, lake managers and others feel they are soldiering on to improve conditions in the Great Lakes, but fear that quiet, incremental progress will not be enough to slow damage to the overall health of the ecosystem. Political leadership creates public profile and engagement, which is needed to generate more momentum and resources. One way of raising public profile could be the appointment of designated political “champions”.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Canada and Ontario should publicly profile their shared commitment to a “healthy, prosperous and sustainable” Great Lakes Basin now and in future and should consider options for raising public awareness, such as appointing federal and provincial political co-champions.

FINDING 8: Funding is inadequate to achieve the purpose of the Agreement.

No other point was made as often as the importance of funding to getting results. Resources were mentioned in response to all sorts of different questions. Some participants identified specific areas that need more funding, such as “big ticket” infrastructure (e.g. stormwater treatment), while others simply said that the COA is “woefully underfunded.”

There were many comments that the total financial resources available are not in line with what needs to be done. Internal participants were asked if staff had the authority and tools they need to make decisions and take action. About 53% said yes, 27% said no (others said they didn’t know). Some related “tools” to resources, but others did not e.g., “Often it is the resources that are lacking, not the tools or authority.”

A number of comments spoke to the importance of allocating available funding to the highest priorities. Some feared a few priorities would consume all the money, but others were concerned that government allocations tended to be locked in, based on program funding, making it impossible to move funding away from underperforming and/or less urgent projects to emerging or more pressing challenges.

There was concern from some participants about the pacing of funding under the Agreement. They said there is a loss of momentum as one agreement tapers off (and funding with it) in its final year of review and reporting before a new one is signed and funded. But mainly the comments were about how much more progress could be made with greater financial support.

“Agreements are wonderful things. But only people can give them legs. And only financing can drive the process. Without adequate people or financing, the process dies and/or people become frustrated.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“COA needs an economic case for getting funding – a solid strategic plan and a financial case.”

INTERVIEW

“We have made significant progress as a result of COA funding on projects that had been waiting for some time.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“The inability [of Management Committee] to realign resources is very frustrating. The budget is set before MC has an opportunity for review. It has little strategic influence.”

INTERVIEW

The consensus was overwhelming that more money will be needed to make real progress under a renewed COA. Where additional resources should come from was not explored much, although there was a suggestion for a royalty on water use as a new source of revenue. The issue of funding is complicated by the fact that there is also funding going into programs that benefit the Great Lakes Basin but do not fall under the COA umbrella.

Experience suggests that there are other ways to generate more funding without relying entirely on new allocations from government. It may be possible to leverage private funding from business and industry on the Great Lakes. Some environmental NGOs are successful fund-raisers and have shown willingness to partner with government on projects that help meet their objectives. Reallocation within funding envelopes may also be possible, particularly if the political leadership (see Recommendation 7) places a high priority on the Great Lakes Basin.

RECOMMENDATION 8: It will be necessary to increase the allocations, reallocate, raise or leverage resources from the public and private sectors to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

FINDING 9: Working relationships among the Parties to the COA are generally good. The success of relationships with external stakeholders is uneven.

The COA says the two governments are committed to working in a “cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion, with each other and others in the Basin” to achieve the vision. The survey responses indicate that the biggest weakness on this topic involves the “others” in the Basin.

That said, the overall response was positive, and working horizontally across jurisdictional boundaries is recognized as one of the most difficult things for governments, which are organized into vertical departments or ministries, to achieve. Over three-quarters of those responding to the Internal Survey felt that the Parties do work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion with each other and other partners. This challenge will become even more difficult, however, with the expansion of the Agreement (Recommendation 4).

Only 53% of the External Survey participants felt that government agencies work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion *with them*. Some people drew a distinction between cooperation vs. coordination vs. integration, but did not necessarily agree on which was happening and which was not.

“There are sometimes minor disagreements, but in general, the Parties work very well together.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“Our experience is that cooperation, coordination and integration are lacking, even between Federal and Provincial partners.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“As a major industrial stakeholder on the Great Lakes, I see very little information exchange, support or participation opportunities.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“Frequent change in management structure of the committees (AIC) has hampered momentum and continuity of action. [We] need more engagement of agencies at the implementation level.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

This Review recommends ways to improve how the Parties of COA work with other partners. To get off on the right foot, it is important that consultations on a new Agreement involve a broader spectrum of stakeholders, particularly in light of expansion of the Agreement. The strengthening of networks should help to build constructive working relationships that will carry over into more cooperative, coordinated and integrated implementation of the new COA.

Stakeholders' concerns and capacities should be reflected in the ways in which projects are carried out. Stakeholder organizations have different strengths to contribute. As the next section explains, local communities are in a unique position to contribute to initiatives that will help achieve the vision.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Improving and expanding stakeholder relations should be a priority in the development and implementation of the new Agreement.

FINDING 10: The success of collaboration with local communities and local organizations is mixed.

Internal participants are very aware that governments cannot achieve objectives of the Agreement without the contribution of others. Two-thirds said other partners and NGOs make a difference in implementation of the Agreement. There was more than one comment that other partners, particularly at the local level, are carrying a major load when it comes to getting work done on the ground.

While there were comments about “good collaboration”, there was also criticism of “top-down” approaches and “unilateral initiatives” rather than genuine collaboration with local communities and NGOs. Based on some of the comments, there is work to be done to convince local players to get involved. For example, one internal participant said some NGOs don't want to participate because of what they see as a slow and cumbersome process to achieve results.

“The other partners sometimes accomplish more than the actual parties to the Agreement (i.e. municipalities, since they are local, on the ground, have the responsibility, resources and authority to make decisions and take the necessary actions).”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“At the field level, there is much interaction between Agency representatives (Lake Advisors, Coordinator) and partners.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“The challenge is to get out of decades of old thinking of Great Lakes cleanup as focusing on toxic hot spots and truly beginning to take an ecosystem approach to protecting the Great Lakes. There is an opportunity to take a strategic direction with a plan for the Great Lakes, sub-plans for each lake based on regional priorities, and then implementing by taking a bottom-up approach where local communities are empowered to take action, and the federal-provincial roles are to facilitate through funding, research and administrative support.

EXTERNAL PARTICIPANT

“There have been occasional exceptions, but for the most part, agencies retain a ‘top down’ approach to environmental work. Most agencies work poorly at the local level and tend to have a paternalistic approach to dealing with issues at the local community level.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

More attention should be paid by the two governments to harnessing the capacities of local communities to take action on environmental priorities under a new COA. Local organizations can deliver programs in the field, rally public support in their communities, and they may also be able to leverage local financial and human resources to supplement government funding. Providing government support may entail bringing relevant organizations together to discuss collaborative action, communicating the latest research in an understandable format, and providing resources and administrative backup.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Canada and Ontario should consider all possible options to enhance collaboration with local communities and local organizations.

FINDING 11: There is no structure or strategy that engages the broad range of interests in the Great Lakes Basin and brings them into the process.

Part of the management structure for the current COA includes the Great Lakes Innovation Committee (GLIC), which includes stakeholders (municipalities, academia, forestry, fisheries, public health, conservation, industry, and environmental and other interested organizations).

GLIC was established to provide advice to Management Committee on innovative initiatives and it has focused its work on urban planning and information.

Feedback from the focus groups and interviews indicated that the GLIC structure is not considered an effective vehicle, as designed. Its focus and membership are too narrow.

Environment Canada was involved in GLIC discussions, but other COA Parties were not. Nor is GLIC membership inclusive of the interests in the Basin.

External survey participants indicated that stakeholders support the COA. Almost 84% said they and their organizations understand and support the goals, results expected and priorities of the Agreement. However, there were comments in response to other questions about COA being “too

bureaucratic” and too “closed door.” These came mostly from external partners. Some of the comments related to cooperation on implementation, while other focused on information-sharing and involvement of partners.

“To date, COA has been quite top down and closed door – efforts to change this will result in better progress, I think.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“Government has little interest in identifying problems – more interested in greenwashing.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“Communication approach is satisfying an old paradigm in a new information age.”

INTERVIEW

It used to be that government bureaucracies generated most of the information for policy and strategy development within their own walls. Decision-making tended to be an internal process. Given the knowledge explosion, high-speed communications, the strength of advocacy groups and the demands from a well-informed public for a “say” on issues that affect them, smart governments are reaching out and involving stakeholders and the public in the decision-making process. It makes for better decisions (more ideas at the table) and more effective implementation (support is built early on for collaborative action).

The Review concluded that a Public Advisory Committee (PAC) should be established for the COA. Membership and terms of reference for this new Committee will require careful consideration. Members must be knowledgeable to provide useful advice on policy, strategy and science. The Chair of the Public Advisory Committee should sit on the governance body, now called the Management Committee, to create a stronger link between stakeholders’ advice and decision-making.

RECOMMENDATION 11: A Public Advisory Committee should be established to promote public engagement and provide policy, strategy and science advice to the decision-making body of the COA.

FINDING 12: Blurring of governance responsibilities with management roles is hindering accountability and hampering implementation.

Under the current COA, both governance and management functions are vested in the Management Committee (MC). It is expected to provide strategic direction and is ultimately accountable for implementation of the Agreement (governance), but it is also involved at the level of activities/projects (management – linking governance with the actual work on the ground). The management functions seem to be overwhelming the governance functions.

There is confusion, even among those involved, as to who has the lead on what, within the COA. There are differing expectations for what the COA is about, and uncertainty about how it relates to other bilateral agreements on the Great Lakes.

The MC, which includes all the Parties to the COA, has a list of responsibilities set out in the Agreement. The first is setting priorities and establishing strategies for addressing emerging environmental issues or management functions based on regular and ongoing review of scientific information, monitoring reports, public consultations and other information. The Internal Survey asked if the MC has the processes in place to identify, assess and respond to emerging issues and concerns. Only about 31% agreed, while 37% disagreed and 20% didn't know. The comments generally pointed to the need for the MC to act at a more strategic level. There were also concerns that it is more of a reporting-to mechanism when what is needed is leadership.

Another question in the Internal Survey explored whether the current “management structure (i.e., the committees) is efficient and effective”. The answer was yes from 45%, no from 35%, and 20% said they didn't know. The Internal Survey also asked participants if they were satisfied with the decision-making processes in the COA. The response again was lukewarm in favour – 47% compared to 32% who were not satisfied (22% said they didn't know).

There were concerns from some participants that a governing body that meets only twice a year does not have enough time and cannot give enough priority to the process to make decisions in a timely fashion and provide the necessary leadership.

“MC has not provided this service [responding to emerging issues] and is mainly an approvals mechanism. Processes [are] not in place to do anything more than that, mainly due to timing of meetings and large amount of administration needed for preparation. Role of MC needs to be reviewed and revised if this is to be effective.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“The structure is okay, however...it is a challenge to get everyone interested in all management aspects because the Agreement so heavily impacts the work of EC and MOE and only touches on the efforts of some agencies. Management Committee could be more effective if it used its time to discuss strategy, united Canadian strategy for the Great Lakes...”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“Given the complexity of the governance of the [Great Lakes Basin], I think it works very well.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“There is very little in terms of direction from either MC or AIC [Annex Implementation Committee]. It seems that we just report into them, but nothing comes back in terms of next steps or action. The Agreement needs leadership in order to solve the piecemeal approach and we are not getting it.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“If this were the case [i.e. processes to identify, assess and respond to emerging issues], risk assessment approach would be used and a strategic framework to guide COA renewal would be in place now.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

Is the Management Committee, as currently constructed, the best way to provide the necessary accountability for implementation of the new COA? Given the level of misgivings about the current structure, expressed through the Review findings, it would seem logical at least to take a look at other models. The Box (shown next) provides very brief descriptions of three examples of different approaches. The models illustrate the following:

- A council, which brings together government Ministers from different jurisdictions to discuss national priorities and determine work to be carried out under its auspices. A staff steering committee provides ongoing management and advice.
- An arm’s length commission, with members appointed by two governments and with funding from both. Boards, committees and contract agencies carry out the mandate. There are citizen’s committees to advise and a staff Secretariat to provide support.
- A tripartite board, which has equal membership from government and two groups of stakeholders, with members representing and consulting their constituencies. It was created to oversee implementation of a tripartite agreement with a list of specific commitments.

Some of these other models are more publicly-focused than the MC, which is an intergovernmental committee of public servants. There was some concern expressed about a revolving-door membership over the five-year period as some senior public servants moved to other job responsibilities and were replaced by successors at the MC table and on the Annex Implementation Committee.

There are advantages and disadvantages to any governance model. The models to be examined do not have to be limited to the ones mentioned in this report. The purpose of such a review is to identify alternatives that would allow the governing body to carry out its appropriate role more effectively and efficiently. The Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector (1999) described eight features of active and effective oversight of an organization by its governing body. The features have been adapted to reflect the governance role for the COA.

1. steering towards the vision and guiding strategic planning;
2. being transparent, including communicating with partners, stakeholders and the public;
3. developing appropriate structures for implementation of the Agreement;
4. understanding roles and responsibilities of the Parties;
5. maintaining fiscal responsibility;
6. ensuring that an effective management team is in place and providing oversight;
7. implementing assessment and control systems; and
8. planning for succession and potential future Agreements.

Analysis will be required to determine which model or models are most appropriate for the COA to provide appropriate accountability to the public and to exercise effective leadership.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Canada and Ontario should review the governance structure for the COA with a view to:

- **strengthening accountability and public transparency;**
- **clarifying leadership vs. management roles;**
- **ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of implementation.**

A clearer separation of roles between Management Committee, which should provide strategic direction and leadership, and the Annex Implementation Committee (AIC), which should provide management/administration of COA implementation, is a necessary first step to improve governance.

As part of the review, alternative models of governance should be examined to determine if a different structure would work better to achieve the Parties' vision for the Great Lakes Basin.

Three Examples of Governance Models

Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) involves federal, provincial and territorial ministers who usually meet twice a year to discuss national environmental priorities and determine work to be carried out under the auspices of the CCME. The Council's purpose is to promote cooperation and coordination on interjurisdictional issues. Council members propose national standards and objectives, but CCME does not have authority to implement or enforce legislation. The Environmental Planning and Protection Committee, made up of staff from each jurisdiction, acts as a steering committee. It provides ongoing advice and coordinate projects assigned to intergovernmental task groups.

Great Lakes Fishery Commission consists of four Canadian commissioners appointed by the Privy Council in Ottawa and four U.S. commissioners (plus an alternate) appointed by the President. There is a Secretariat, based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to provide support. The Commission receives funding from both governments, and also has trust funds in both countries to accept private donations. It has appointed Boards, Committees and contract agencies (which include the federal Fisheries and Oceans department in Canada) to carry out its mandate. It has a Committee of Advisors from each country, made up of citizens. Among its responsibilities, the Commission facilitates the implementation of *A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries*.

Ontario Forest Accord Advisory Board (OFAAB) was a tripartite body with equal representation from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), the forest industry and the conservation community. The Accord was negotiated in 1999 by MNR, on behalf of the Ontario government, with the industry and conservationists (40 agencies called the Partnership for Public Lands). The Board was formed to oversee and steer implementation of the 31 commitments in the Accord. It reported to the Minister of Natural Resources. Members were empowered to make decisions and were able to commit funds and staff from their organizations to support their decisions. A Secretariat provided information and advice and carried out Board instructions.

FINDING 13: There has been only limited engagement of Aboriginal people in the COA.

A workshop was held with several First Nations in the Great Lakes Basin and representatives of Environment Canada and Health Canada before the signing of the 2002 COA, but there has been little involvement by Aboriginal communities in implementation of the current COA. A few First Nations have been involved, to varying degrees, in Remedial Action Plans or Lakewide Management Plans.

“We need to place more emphasis on First Nations, including the approach and capacity to provide input.”

FOCUS GROUP

There are legal requirements for consultation with Aboriginal people where government initiatives may affect treaty rights. While COA has no legislative authority, and therefore has no direct impact on Aboriginal rights, there is good reason to engage and involve Aboriginal people in the COA in advance of development of a new Agreement and later in implementation. First Nations communities have a unique store of knowledge of the natural history of their lands, and a major stake in the restoration, protection and conservation of that heritage.

The Review suggests that discussions include Métis groups, in addition to the First Nations of the Great Lakes Basin.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Canada and Ontario should engage Aboriginal people of the Great Lakes Basin in meaningful discussions about the new COA.

FINDING 14: Canada and Ontario are not paying sufficient attention to the precautionary principle in making decisions about the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

Canada and Ontario have not fully embraced the precautionary principle in the COA. This principle says that full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing action in the face of threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage. Full scientific certainty can take a long time, years or even decades. Good scientific advice that provides evidence of degradation of ecosystems should be acted upon before it is too late. Once the definitive study comes in, there may be no way to retrieve what has been lost

Internal respondents were asked whether the principles of the 2002 Agreement have been followed. Positive responses ranged from a high of 93% for science-based management to a low of 47% for the precautionary principle. Those on the high end of positive responses (between 80% and 90%) were accountability, conservation, ecosystem approach, free exchange

of information, public and stakeholder participation, and rehabilitation. On the low end, but still well above the precautionary principle, were adaptive management (68%), pollution reduction (72%), prevention (74%), and sustainability (72%).

Of the 12 principles in the COA, adherence to the precautionary principle was the only failing grade given by the survey participants. For that reason, and because of the importance of this principle for the future, the Review is specifically recommending it be reinforced in the next Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION 14: The new COA should reinforce the precautionary principle.

FINDING 15: Some of the results and commitments in the current COA are too vague, and there is no clear linkage to achievement of the goals.

The current Agreement differs from past COAs in that it establishes, in the Annexes, specific commitments for each government to achieve certain results. This is seen as an improvement over previous Agreements. The commitments are activities that each government will engage in, and they are listed under each result. But some results and commitments are more targeted than others.

There was relatively strong agreement (70%) from internal participants to a statement that the COA through its Annexes “articulates the commitments that each of the Parties will deliver in order to contribute to the achievement of the stated goals and results.” Almost two-thirds (65%) also said the outcomes were reasonable and measurable to monitor progress and report on the achievement of commitments and results. One-quarter (25%) said they were not.

However, a number of comments were received questioning whether the commitments, as articulated, are as useful as they could be. The commitments were too “broad” or “vague” or too “open to interpretation”, according to some respondents. Similarly, the results could be made more “concrete”. In addition, the linkage between goals, results and commitments is unclear. A new COA will need to clarify how results and commitments will contribute to the achievement of five-year goals.

Performance measures were identified as part of the implementation process after the 2002 Agreement was signed. Some participants commented that it was difficult to develop effective measures after the fact. The anticipated results, the activities (commitments) to achieve them, and the way to measure success should be developed together.

“Agency accountability for various commitments is well defined but... the commitments do not always link well to the expected result.”

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

“The results and commitments are so subjective and up for interpretation; responsibility is shared by interpretations are not clear/agreed on. The goals are clearer.”

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

“The goals, results and commitments often have no apparent link.”

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

“Most agencies spent half the Agreement’s time term trying to figure out what they were supposed to do and how to measure the progress of those activities.”

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

“The wording of the commitments is generally generic and leaves a considerable amount of room for movement of the deliverables.”

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

The Annexes in the new COA will be strengthened and implementation improved by identification of SMART outcomes. SMART stands for:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable,
- Realistic
- Time-bound or time-specific.

Getting there will require a process to come to agreement on what the most important outcomes are. But the time spent on this up-front process will make performance management during the next Agreement more meaningful and will help to ensure progress on Great Lakes Basin issues that are identified as priorities through the strategic plan (Recommendation 3).

RECOMMENDATION 15: The new COA should identify SMART outcomes to focus shared efforts over the next five years.

FINDING 16: COA implementation is tied up in red tape.

There were comments about implementation of COA being overwhelmed by administrative requirements, better known as red tape.

Generally, support was low for the administrative structure put in place for the COA (the Secretariat function). Only 37% of internal participants thought the administrative structure was efficient and effective. The merger of the two Secretariats into one was seen as a positive move to reduce overlap. According to some feedback, the staff in the Secretariat should be full-time.

The Internal Survey also asked whether the COA management (MC, AIC, Secretariats and working groups) have done an effective job of coordinating assessments, evaluating the results and recommending amendments against established objectives. Approval was lukewarm at 48%.

But the more telling statistic may be the “don’t knows”, who usually were in the 10% or less range on most questions in the Internal Survey. On the question of the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative structure, the don’t-knows were 35%, and on the question of effectiveness of management in assessing, evaluating and adapting, the don’t-knows were almost as high (32%). The don’t knows were also high (34%) in answer to a question about Management Committee processes to identify, assess and respond to emerging issues.

This finding fits with concerns expressed about a management/administrative system that is cumbersome and *confusing*. How can you know, for example, if the system is working if it is unclear how the process works?

Administration was characterized by the commentary as “too complex and layered.” One of the focus groups talked about the layering of decision-making and said there is “too much overhead” in the current process.” One comment said: “lots of assessments/evaluations – limited actions.” Another called the planning and reporting processes “very labour intensive.”

“Annex implementation is bureaucratic and broken.”

INTERVIEW

“Current structure is far too complex and layered. The agreement and its actions do not require that many levels, but do require the support of various participants.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“I see very little evidence of actual management decision-making. There is certainly an abundance of administrative decision-making, however.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“There is a lot of confusion as to who is responsible for what.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“...too complex and layered. Too multi-actioned and too confusing to those who participate. Results in wasted efforts, repetition and a great sense of frustration. Needs to be streamlined...somehow.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

This Review strongly urges creation of a new, streamlined management/administrative system to provide an effective and efficient link between governance and the work being done at the operational level. Since this Review also recommends exploration of alternate governance models, whatever new management/administrative system is put in place must be aligned and consistent with the governance model that is chosen.

RECOMMENDATION 16: A more efficient and effective administrative structure should be put in place, and administrative processes should be streamlined, disentangled and simplified at the operational level. The new administrative system must be aligned with the governance model.

FINDING 17: Decision-makers at all levels are not getting the information they need.

One of the major internal administrative problems is the management of information. This is an area that is covered in one of the Annexes (Monitoring and Information Management). Despite the efforts put into internal reporting, information does not seem to be flowing properly, either up or down. Staff do not seem to feel well-informed about decision-making at the top, while there is concern at upper levels that the Management Committee is not getting the kind of information it needs to provide the necessary leadership.

Fifty-eight percent of internal participants agreed with the statement that effective tools are in place to improve collaboration on priorities, track progress and report on achievements.

“There are instances where the top-down approach prevented information that should have gone up from being provided for direction. They don’t always want to know... and the high-level requirement for information often prevents detail that is too complex or lengthy from being brought forward for discussion or direction. Not everything can be made simple...”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“The committees, from my perspective, are disconnected to the majority of the work we do. Their role seems to be solely that of reporting. There needs to be better two-way communication.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

“Reporting, especially through various databases, is not as certain as it could be in that the timelines for inputting detail and projects are not the same across the agencies... Each agency works on their own fiscal schedule, their own workplan schedule, their own political schedule etc. etc. For the most part, this can’t be avoided, but it is still a deterrent.”

INTERNAL SURVEY

Considerable staff effort is going into tracking and reporting, but it is questionable whether the reporting is productive. Staff seemed to be bogged down in burdensome and ineffective processes. This issue could be lumped into removal of administrative overhead (above), but it was considered important enough to warrant a separate recommendation.

One of the key benefits of good information collection and management is its support for good decision-making. Conditions, needs and priorities can change over a five-year period. Implementation schedules may need to be adjusted or human and financial resources moved from one area to another.

The 2002 COA built in more flexibility than past Agreements. It states that Annexes may be developed at any time, and come into force when they are signed by the Parties. Annexes may be amended, by consent, as well.

In order for the Agreement to be managed adaptively, whether Annexes are amended or added or implementation plans are sped up or changed in light of changing conditions, there has to be current and relevant information flowing up from the operational level to decision-makers providing strategic direction and back down to the implementation teams so that decisions can be made about programs on the ground. In this way, course corrections can be made, the COA can get out ahead of emerging issues, and operations staff will feel more connected to the overall strategy. Rather than working on information systems in the abstract, the best way to find out what information is needed by whom is to ask decision-makers what they need.

RECOMMENDATION 17: To better inform decision-making at all levels, the flow and coordination of information should be improved. A good starting-point would be to ask decision-makers about the information they need and are not getting.

FINDING 18: The COA is not generating much public interest or support.

Both internal and external participants were asked about the public reports generated under the COA – whether they are meaningful, reliable, accurate, timely and clear (plain language). There was not much enthusiasm expressed in the External Survey (53%). There was a little more in the Internal Survey where 62% were supportive, but some of the most negative comments came from within.

Timeliness was an issue in several comments. There was confusion as to whether reports were meant for highly-informed stakeholders or the general interest. The effort to do both at the same time seems to satisfy neither – too generic for the stakeholders and too technical for the general public. Some internal and external respondents thought the reporting too often was used for government “spin” control.

“How do we make every Canadian support Great Lakes restoration?”

INTERVIEW

“Choose five headline indicators for the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.”

INTERVIEW

“Most COA reports issued to date are way overdue or written for a generic audience that they have little meaning. Serious stakeholders place little value on this sort of thing. I expect the truly informed public will turn to NGO efforts, such as the recent Prescription for the Great Lakes, for their information.

INTERNAL SURVEY

“A better network of information exchange is required to provide stakeholders with information in a timely manner to permit meaningful review and comment.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“Reports end up being spin documents for government programs, rather than providing meaningful information or tools for accountability. There is little to no publicity or dissemination of reports.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

“Progress report is well written and focuses on improvements, but does not address gaps. As well, reports are not produced in a timely fashion.”

EXTERNAL SURVEY

Building the public's awareness and enthusiasm for actions to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem will require attention to relations with various publics, including the local groups that are already working hard on cleanup, restoration and other initiatives in their local rivers or on their local lakefronts. The suggestion that a few clear priorities should be chosen and communicated widely is a good one. There are many different communications approaches that could be taken to headline Great Lakes Basin sustainability. What is carried out will depend at least in part on the resources allocated to the effort.

RECOMMENDATION 18: Canada and Ontario should examine how best to provide information to increase public awareness and promote public participation in decision-making related to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

IN CONCLUSION

The recommendations in this report will, it is hoped, serve to:

- inform the renewal, enhancement and expansion of the Canada-Ontario Agreement on the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem, and
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its implementation.

To achieve those overarching goals, the package of recommended actions includes:

- A comprehensive environmental strategy for the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem
- Expansion of government partners
- Broader scope of challenges and opportunities addressed by the COA
- More funding from both public and private sectors
- Clarification of governance and management responsibilities
- SMART outcomes (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound/specific)
- Streamlined administrative processes
- More active stakeholder relations and local community participation
- Effective information-sharing
- Higher political profile and greater public transparency
- Increased public involvement and support.

The public will be invited to review and comment on the findings and recommendations in this final report. During the public consultation period, further work will be done on some of the practical aspects of how to move forward during the period of renewal.



Appendices

Appendix A:
Survey Instrument

Appendix B:
Survey Data

Appendix C:
Interviews/Focus Group Questions

Appendix D:
COA Review Participants

Appendix E:
Selected Research on Governance

Appendix A:

Survey Instrument

ELECTRONIC SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose of the Survey

In program evaluation terms, this review was a post-program design using participant attitudes and opinions regarding the value of the Agreement and its implementation.

The “Survey Monkey”

The COA Team subscribed to an on-line survey service at surveymonkey.com which provides all the administration tasks related to surveys.

The Survey Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed by the project Team as a series of statements in which respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement. A simple scale of Strongly Agree, Mostly Agree, Mostly Disagree, Strongly Disagree and Don't Know was provided.

The evaluation statements for the Survey of Internal Respondents consisted of the following:

1. The Agreement is making a difference to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.
2. The goals, results expected and priorities are understood and shared throughout the organization of the Parties to the Agreement.
3. The scope of the Agreement adequately address the key aquatic environmental issues in the basin.
4. The Agreement through its Annexes articulates the commitments that each of the Parties will deliver in order to contribute to the achievement of the stated goals and results.
5. The Agreement effectively identifies actions that support the implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and associated Remedial Action Plans and Lakewide Management Plans.
6. To what extend do you feel that each of the following principles was adhered to during the implementation of the Agreement.
In this case, each principle was listed and participants were asked to use the following scale: “To a great extent”, Somewhat, “Not at all” and Don't Know”
7. Please feel free to provide any comments regarding the “principles” addressed in the question above.
8. The current management structure (i.e committees) is efficient and effective.
9. The current administrative structure (i.e. secretariats) is efficient and effective.

10. The Parties work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion with each other and partners to achieve the objectives of the Agreement.
11. Other partners and non-governmental organizations are involved and are making a difference in the implementation of the Agreement.
12. Reasonable and measurable outcomes have been identified to monitor progress and report on the achievement of commitments and results for each Annex.
13. The Management Committee has the processes in place to identify, assess and respond to emerging issues and concerns.
14. The staff of the Parties of the Agreement have the authority and tools they need to make decisions and take action.
15. I am satisfied with the decision-making processes in COA.
16. Effective tools and mechanisms are in place to improve collaboration on priorities, track progress and report on achievements.
17. The COA Management Committees (MC, AIC, secretariats and working groups) have done an effective job of coordinating assessments, evaluating the results and recommending amendments against established objectives.
18. The various reports produced under the Agreement (Progress Reports, State of the Lakes, Citizen's Guide etc) are meaningful, reliable and accurate, timely and written using plain language.
19. What are the major challenges and opportunities for improving the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the Agreement.

The evaluation statements for the Survey of External Respondents consisted of the following:

1. How much involvement have you had with the Canada-Ontario Agreement? Scaled according to "Lots", "Some", "Little", "None" "Don't Know"
2. If you answered anything other than "none" to Question One, how do you feel about that involvement?
3. The Agreement is making a difference to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem?
4. I/my organization understand(s) and support(s) the goals, results expected and priorities for the current Agreement.
5. The scope of the Agreement adequately addresses address the key aquatic environmental issues in the basin?
6. The Agreement is an effective component of Canada's and Ontario's efforts to implement the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and associated Remedial Action Plans and Lakewide Management Plans.
7. Government agencies involved in COA work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion with external partners to achieve the objectives of the Agreement.
8. The various reports produced under the Agreement (Progress Reports, State of the Lakes, Citizen's Guide etc) are meaningful, reliable and accurate, timely and written using plain language.
9. What are the major challenges and opportunities for improving the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the Agreement?

Timing and Response Rates

The survey was conducted in December '05 – January '06 and secured responses from 63 internal and 42 external participants. These responses represented 52% of the internal survey sample and 47% of the external survey sample.





Appendix B:

Survey Data

INTERNAL SURVEY

1. COMMENTS...

- This COA has made a difference however, the level of funding needs to be greatly increased in order to deal with infrastructure issues (STP, storm water treatment, CSO's, etc) and contaminated sediment remediation. Without financial support to address the big ticket items it will be difficult to meet all of the COA commitments.
- Invasive species and suburban sprawl may be stripping away any gains.
- Excellent progress in restoring beneficial uses in AOCs.
- 2002 COA (with Provincial funding) has undoubtedly provided a renewed opportunity to support the implementation of RAPs and LaMPs. In my opinion it is somewhat limited by a failure to include key interests at the table such as municipal affairs, infrastructure and CAs.
- The agreement is an effective means to gain governments' attention and support for making progress towards a common vision, goals and targets and is an important means to influence binational discussions. It provides an impt framework for coordination, collaboration, communicating achievements. Challenges – renewing or delivering on future targets with current prov'l and fed. gov't fiscal policy and key agency resources (ie. core staff). – what about rotating chairs for COA MC – what about a MC that is focused more on 5-20 years out (ie. working on the next agreement more than the current one)?
- One of the challenges in rehabilitating, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes in setting priorities and resources to accomplish this goal. Currenting a long list of needs and activities are listed in the agreement, but no set priority, timeline or resources are discussed. An ultimate agreement would be one that has a charter attached with a detailed work plan.
- Without COA, the drivers to make a difference would not exist at senior levels. Progress is being made but could certainly be doing a better job.
- There needs to be more funds allocated, and money spent on very big ticket items – Or perhaps focussing on a small number of watersheds – 1 per basin per 5 years, and making huge inroads into their rehabilitation – massive restoration programs, buffers, wetlands, habititat creation etc.
- Provides opportunity for multi-departmental exchange of what they are doing with an eye for collaboration/cooperation and increased effectiveness.
- Information on the difference it is making is lacking, from my perspective... I'm not convinced the GL are a better place for COA.

2. The Agreement and Annexes			
1. The Agreement is making a difference to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		33.3%	21
Mostly Agree		57.1%	36
Mostly Disagree		1.6%	1
Strongly Disagree		1.6%	1
Don't know		6.3%	4
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)		55.6%
Total Respondents			63
(skipped this question)			0

- Offers an important excellent instrument for much needed federal-provincial pooling of limited resources for the betterment of the lakes.
- Excellent effort at restoring, creating awareness and maintaining partnerships for conservation, but not convinced that we are protecting what we have, merely slowed the loss of habitat.
- commitment required to accelerate restoration activities (e.g., AOCs); challenges in capital investment required to delist AOCs; challenges in Long Range Transport of harmful pollutants (from outside basin) and historical (sediments) and/or non-point sources of pollutants.
- In as much as COA is the Parties mechanism to deliver on the GLWQA then it's a given that COA is making a difference.
- The agreement has the right intention/s. Most of the actions identified are targeted at the appropriate areas and with an aim to restoring, protecting and/or conserving the GL basin.
- HAVe established a large network of ne partners working together and creating synergy.
- It is the principal if not only agreement specific to restoring AOCs so of course it is vital to the LAMPs and AOCs.
- I'm not aware of what measures were identified to answer this questiona and what the assessed results have told us.
- The funding to MNR is critical in delivering the fish and wildlife commitments. MNR has a broad picture of what needs to be done and funding allows us to make a difference at a broad scale in a coordinated fashion. Otherwise we are just advising others on their projects – that are designed to meet local objectives – this does not build a provincial commitment to COA.
- The agreement is having success at increasing public awareness and involvement at a local level, and has been good at getting low cost projects (e.g. habitat enhancement) going, however it is woefully underfunded to address serious infrastructure and contaminated sediment related problems.
- The Agreement is not structured across the broader public sector and does little to engage and mobilize academia, municipalities and CA's. Its relevance to existing senior-level governance is uncontestable. Its relevance to appropriate mgmt activities for the Great Lakes Basin is very questionable. Mainly it lacks vision and flexibility. Main actors around the Cdn side of the Basin are not involved. There is no clarity related to the motivations, policies and objectives of the 2 senior levels of government.
- Within the scope of my involvement on the Implementation Team and with several projects relating to securement, protected area networks, and protected area monitoring, my sense is that significant work is being conducted throughout the GLB. Priorities are well defined. On occasion, there is some apparent overlap with other work being conducted by the province, but usually, the COA projects supplement, rather than duplicate, that work.
- Areas are slowly being delisted but is the on-going commitments that will be required to maintain a delisted status that need to be paid attention to.
- On Lake Superior excellent progress has been acheived in the areas of native species rehabilitation, lakewide food web dynamics, habitat rehabilitation and public involvement in ecosystem restoration and stewardship. With progress comes the realization that many challenges remain in many of these areas.
- We have made significant progress as a result of COA funding on projects that had been waiting for some time.

2. COMMENTS...

- No question that those involved in Great Lakes work on a day to day basis understand the agreement. We had to deal with the commitments and performance measures. I am not sure the broader organization ever regarded COA as more than an “add on” to business as usual or a funding mechanisms for GL related projects that were not considered real ministry priorities.
- Still see Parties, or parts thereof, or non-signatory agencies who aren’t benefactors of federal or provincial GL or COA funding reluctant or refusing to report achievements of their programs, initiatives and partners or seeking collaborative means to implement (eg. Agricultural Framework). When there is no new funding, the commitment to the agreement diminishes substantially.
- Health Canada appears divided on this topic in terms of capacity needs.
- See No. 1 comments.
- The results and commitments are so subjective and up for interpretation, responsibility is shared but interpretations are not clear/agreed on. The goals are clearer.
- Many units using to fund core programs rather than making impact on new or ignored areas.
- Agreement is restrictive in that where an element or project is not proceeding as anticipated, and cannot continue in the manner outlined due to fiscal restraints, several other projects may or are affected.
- There tends to be some blurring of the lines when it comes to responsibilities for attaining goals and results (which is not necessarily a bad thing). A great deal of collaboration between and within agencies has occurred and in many cases progress is being made on many goals as a team effort.
- One challenge is that meeting many of the COA goals, results and expected priorities are contingent upon efforts of agencies that are not part of the Agreement.
- The political components of ‘working together’ are understood, though the environmental goals might not be.
- Mostly limited to the two principal agencies – EC and MOE
- For those who are directly involved in COA there is good understanding.
- Goals are spelled out well enough in the agreement but how to get there and assessment of progress (interim goals) for each result/commitment is not consistently well defined or consistent across the agreement. Much of COA(2002) was built from the commitments up rather than from the goals/results down. Next COA provides an opportunity to better link each expected result to implementation (how do we achieve it).

2. The goals, results expected and priorities are understood and shared throughout the organization of the Parties to the Agreement.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	9.7%	6
	Mostly Agree	59.7%	37
	Mostly Disagree	19.4%	12
	Strongly Disagree	3.2%	2
	Don't know	8.1%	5
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	51.6%	32
Total Respondents			62
(skipped this question)			1

- The goals, results and commitments often have no apparent link. In a very general sense, the goals and priorities are understood and shared but clear objectives for many of the commitments was not possible. (unbounded) In many cases, this is the way it had to be, given the 5 year planning cycle for the Annexes
- The structure/format of the agreement is confusing and poorly layed out. It is not well written and highly confusing to persons who do not have a thorough expertise and understanding of the background and processes associated with the COA or previous agreements.
- I think there are some opportunities for improvement associated with priority setting at the program/field level.
- We need to continually remind people/staff of the use the money is intended for, and that it is not a top up to normal business operations
- The understanding of the agreement and the contact with its implementation is greatest among EC and OMOE staff and in some cases Conservation Authorities working on its initiatives but quickly diminishes among partners who are more remote from the agreement.
- Within MNR it is very positive that both Districts and Lake Units are working together in this current agreement. This means that the goals etc of COA are understood and bought into throughout MNR. I am not clear on what MOE, EC and other partners are doing with respect to COA.
- The wording surrounding goals and results is too vague to be meaningful. This is useful from a cynical perspective since it allows anything and everything to be viewed as a potential success, but a good faith interpretation of goals and results would have to view current progress as disappointing.
- Great efforts have been undertaken by the implementors of the Agreement to establish measures and indicators of progress and success. Most participant organizations use COA as a means to subsidize existing, entrenched program activities. The measures of success seem more like the rationalizations of existing workplans.
- Generally, the parties understand the constraints under which each other operates. However, there have been a few cases where expectations regarding partnerships and consultation have not been yet, because of political realities or potential duplication with other projects being conducted by the province (e.g., Natural Spaces).
- Results expected for some of the activites are not clearly stated and therefore difficult to assess if totally understood by all.

3. COMMENTS...

- We do not have provincial health agencies at the table. We do not have municipal affairs at the table.
- The next version of the Agreement needs to specifically address threats posed by Aquatic Invasive Species and in particular a plan to address the continuing challenges resulting from inadequate legislation governing the discharge of ballast water.
- Pretty comprehensive in the areas that fall under the jurisdiction of EC, MNR and MOE. Key issues that fall outside these mandates such as land use and infrastructure have not fared as well. In spite of this, these represent some of our major challenges e.g. NPS issues, sprawl, aging wastewater systems, etc. The use of “aquatic” in the question is interesting in the context of major watershed management. For example, many aquatic issues are actually air issues when we consider the impact of atmospheric deposition.
- Would like to see the strategic 5 year desired outcomes for each LaMP, Binational Partnership form basis of some next 5 year targets–current targets are too RAP and pollutant focused. -science and science transfer required to address key uncertainties related to how environment and resource managers need to consider climate change, invasives, urbanization, contaminants in their policy development processes (annual, leg’n, regulations) or risk assessments for determining enforcement or compliance priorities needs strengthening. Focus should be on science to assist decision-makers.
- RAPs/AOCs adequately addressed. Harmful pollutants/LaMPs/Monitoring and Info Mgmt NOT adequately addressed (more “smoke and mirrors”/“business as usual” than real programs.
- The agreement touches upon most of the key issues. However, if in 2007 all the Goals were accomplished, the Great Lakes would still be far from restored or protected. Some issues not effectively addressed include the impact on water quality of urbanization – land use trends, including source-water protection and habitat protection. The Agreement also has difficulty in addressing the municipal infrastrucutre challenge.
- The failure of the Agreement to make a difference on primary sewage treatment plants and exotic species, and it’s concentration upon PTBs are examples of how it fails to hit the mark – environmental issues are exotics and primary plants, stormwater, development and hardening of watersheds, groundwater depletion and the public is concerned about ecosytem health, not so much chemicals like PCBs
- The priority placed on meeting AOC commitments while providing strong focus to international commitments tends to detract from other basin wide issues such as climate change, invasive alien spies and land use impacts

3. The scope of the Agreement adequately address the key aquatic environmental issues in the basin.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	21%	13
	Mostly Agree	62.9%	39
	Mostly Disagree	9.7%	6
	Strongly Disagree	3.2%	2
	Don't know	3.2%	2
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	37.1%	23
Total Respondents			62
(skipped this question)			1

- At a broad scale the Agreement covers the main key environmental issues; however, these issues are complex and highly linked to economic development and social factors.
- Next version should be stronger invasive species challenges. Fish habitat restoration and protection should have more explicit goals.
- Next COA will need to address source protection, have a stronger role for municipalities and look to addressing emerging substances of concern.
- The scope addresses the key environmental issues, but only at a high level and most often not in an all encompassing manner. The specifics of the agreement do not adequately address the issues. The points aren't taken to where they need to go to ensure accurate implementation and follow-up is maintained.
- Need more emphasis on looking at climate change, on finding mechanisms to share information among all agencies and partners and need to start looking at understanding the real impacts of invasives.
- As with most of the following questions, you need to be intimately familiar with the Canada-Ontario Agreement and how it is governed... I am not.
- The scope is very broad and hence virtually all issues could be deemed to be addressed. The problem is translating the high level discussion into meaningful and measurable results.
- Where is epidemiology and GL? Where is drinking water and GL? Where is our understanding of the correlations between GL health and economic well being around the Basin. How do we engage and steer our economies in terms of GL benefits or minimizing impacts. What is the vision that acts as a backdrop for municipal planning and growth. What are the top ten priority issues facing the Great Lakes?
- The agreement is not based on environmental issues resolution and therefore difficult to assess if it addresses key environmental issues. Unlikely that the agreement be based on key issues since these change on an annual basis or at least they would change within the timeframe of an agreement.

4. COMMENTS...

- The agreement has been criticized for using very general terms for progress. The AIC has tried to put bounds on to ensure that success can be measured appropriately but this is not communicated to the public. Suggest that the next COA identify more concrete goals and results.
- The articulation is not clear enough even for a distribution of responsibilities within agencies.
- The ability of the Parties to maintain their commitments has been eroded by successive fiscal reductions. In particular the research component has been dramatically reduced. Contemporary research has always been the backbone of a successful GLWQA but capacity on both sides of the border is compromised. Research is always the first casualty because the effects of such an action are not realized until some time in the future. A very short sighted action.
- Certainly an improvement over previous COAs. I think some progress was made this time in terms of articulating the commitments and identifying performance measures.
- -commitments would likely have been articulated differently if a more collaborative approach was used by the lead agencies in developing commitments. -given the stronger investment by Parties in COA past 3-4 years–should be able to get better by-in for level of detail. -Key delivery agents, mechanisms not really considered as possible commitments–what if two governments agreed to lever each other’s grant programs or funding partnerships.
- The wording of the commitments are generally generic and leave a considerable amount of room for movement of the deliverables.
- As specific activities expected based on results/commitments are up for interpretation. Does not clearly indicate who should be leading.
- Not focused enough. Fewer priorities, focussed on direct action would be useful.
- The COA articulates federal/provincial commitments. It doesn’t articulate what each of the signing agencies is committed to do. That has been captured in an internal exercise.
- Yes, the annexes line up with the commitments, for better or worse.
- The Agreement documents what Ontario, Canada, or Ontario and Canada will deliver, but does not specify lead agency/department.
- The goals and results are generalized statements that adequately provide direction to management actions – but are subject to interpretation at the field level.
- Agency accountability for various commitments is well defined but, as stated above, the commitments do not always link well to the expected result.
- But the problem is that many of the commitments are unbounded and open to interpretation.

4. The Agreement through its Annexes articulates the commitments that each of the Parties will deliver in order to contribute to the achievement of the stated goals and results.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		17.7%	11
Mostly Agree		61.3%	38
Mostly Disagree		17.7%	11
Strongly Disagree		1.6%	1
Don't know		3.2%	2
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)		46.8% 29
Total Respondents			62
(skipped this question)			1

- There were some oversights... mostly partners that play a key role not being identified as a key signatory, or simply not being identified at all. This results in lack of accountability. Also, many commitments are the responsibility of multi-agencies and have numerous divisions/branches that carry out specific mandates. The agreement does not adequately allow for this occurrence, nor does it provide any alternative.
- The result statements are quite broad and thus performance measurement is difficult.
- We need to do more address the water supply and demand issues that are arising due to increased demand and potentially increased climate variability. These can be addressed through minimum supplies to support the ecosystem.
- Again, the Agreement may contain verbiage labelled as “commitments”, but they are too vague to hold the Parties genuinely accountable.
- Most agencies spent half the Agreement’s time term trying to figure out what they were supposed to do and how to measure the progress of those activities. The approach to allocations was based on allotments, existing program commitments on the money, etc. The approach is antithetical to sound project mgmt.
- It is difficult to understand / explain some of the assigned responsibilities and to separate agency responsibilities in some areas where there has been obvious cooperation in the past; eg monitoring and investigations in AOCs. Roles and responsibilities have to be defined for the different parties up front eg feds vs province. ‘
- Really should agree on performance measures ahead of time rather than after the fact.

5. COMMENTS...

- COA tends to go beyond the GLWQA.
- See above. There may be a belief that we have all the research we need to implement an effective remediation program. That would be a narrow and uninformed view.
- I think there was a disconnect between the 2002 COA, the GLWQA and the LaMPs/RAPs. It seemed that eventually COA became more important to the Parties than the collaborative agreements that had been made previously under the LaMP and RAP umbrellas at the local or stakeholder level. Creating a separate annex and leads for Harmful pollutants also created problems for implementation and seemed contrary to the ecosystem approach advocated in the GLWQA.
- Risk-based target-setting and prioritization would help. GLWQA is still schizophrenic about pollutants or ecological integrity.
- See Comment No. 4.
- No clear actions are articulated at all, just expected results which are also unclear.
- Too vague.
- It does support the implementation of the GLWQA because it is a Canada-Ontario Agreement that commits to working toward the GLWQA objectives. However, it does appear in my experience that COA implementation works 90% as a repository of projects and priority actions (ie “identifies the actions”) and only 10% of a driver of actions.
- Yes, they line up with the old fashioned GLWQA and it’s focus on PTBs and RAP sites.
- Not much in support of GLWQA.
- Weaker on the LaMPs. Offshore and non-AOC inshore areas are not adequately protected under the current agreement.
- GLWQA is outdated compared to the last COA (e.g., invasive species). The review and revision of GLWQA will provide an opportunity to redefine priorities and actions under the next COA.
- The LaMPS and RAPs are not linked in the manner they need to be with the agreement or the Water Quality agreement. The relationships between the lakes, and the actions, and agreements are complex and intricate. The current agreement has tried to simplify that unsuccessfully and as a result has missed the opportunity to make the necessary bridges between the more localized plans/actions and the formal agreements/actions required.
- Project priorities are closely tied to LaMPs.
- Are the actions to ensure sustainable water supplies adequately addressed?
- See previous comments on vagueness of actions.
- Actions might be identified but priorities and means are not set.
- it was a conscious decision in the development of the agreement that it not reflect the terms and conditions of the GLWQA. Not known why this decision was made. Although the actions support the GLWQA, the linkages are not clear.
- More of a watershed approach is required to make implementation more effective.

5. The Agreement effectively identifies actions that support the implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and associated Remedial Action Plans and Lakewide Management Plans.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	14.5%	9
	Mostly Agree	66.1%	41
	Mostly Disagree	14.5%	9
	Strongly Disagree	1.6%	1
	Don't know	4.8%	3
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	43.5%	27
Total Respondents			62
(skipped this question)			1

6. To what extent do you feel that each of the following principles was adhered to during the implementation of the Agreement.

	To a great extent	Somewhat	Not at all	Don't know	Response Total
Accountability	35% (21)	52% (31)	3% (2)	10% (6)	60
Adaptive management	3% (3)	63% (38)	12% (7)	20% (12)	60
Conservation	31% (18)	50% (29)	10% (6)	9% (5)	58
Ecosystem approach	22% (13)	67% (40)	5% (3)	7% (4)	60
Free exchange of information	22% (13)	62% (37)	5% (3)	12% (7)	60
Pollution reduction	15% (9)	57% (34)	8% (5)	20% (12)	60
Precautionary principles	7% (4)	40% (24)	18% (11)	35% (21)	60
Prevention	3% (3)	69% (40)	12% (7)	14% (8)	58
Public and stakeholder participation	27% (16)	60% (36)	7% (4)	7% (4)	60
Rehabilitation	23% (14)	65% (39)	5% (3)	7% (4)	60
Science-based management	33% (20)	60% (36)	3% (2)	3% (2)	60
Sustainability	8% (5)	64% (38)	12% (7)	15% (9)	59
Total Respondents					60
(skipped this question)					3

7. Please feel free to provide any comments regarding the "principles" addressed in the question above.

View	Total Respondents	19
(skipped this question)		44

7. COMMENTS...

- In the COA MC terms of reference (p.7), there is a responsibility for: "conducting regular and ongoing public consultation". In my opinion, the formation and work of GLIC does not constitute actual public consultation so COA does not adhere to the principle of public participation (only stakeholder participation through GLIC).
- Wasn't clear whether you referred specifically to the implementation of COA only or the implementation of LaMPs and RAPs since 2002. For example, stakeholders didn't have much input into decisions made about COA but they continue to be involved in RAPs. The increasing emphasis on category 1, 2 and 3 AOCs (delist, complete actions or make progress) are administrative distinctions that will move us away from the principles listed above.
- Regarding "ecosystem approach", I think that everyone is well intended but as each agency has their own mandate (which they should) it seems hard to get coordinated in terms of looking at problems from a whole ecosystem perspective. Even the indicators are treated separately instead of as an interactive system.
- Many agencies involved and difficult to realize work put into projects hence the don't know answers. Also realize, many agencies do not have dedicated resources to COA and therefore try to manage as best we can. No COA resources.

- The difficulties in using an ecosystem approach and science-based management arise from the GLWQA itself being AOC focussed while many of the emerging issues go beyond point source pollution and clean up.
- Accountability – do not fully comprehend contributions made by other Agencies outside of MNR Exchange of information is restrictive and access is subjective to ownership rights / data sharing agreements and compatibility etc., Without strong continued longterm leadership from all agencies at a Basin level, "sustainability" will be fragmented and localized.
- Hard to make general assessments for all agencies. Each agency operated in conjunction with its own mandate and at the direction/discretion of it's senior management. What was intended to be an overarching direction was not adapted as such. As a result, some agencies were making great strides to making changes, implementing requirements and doing follow-up, while others were reluctant from the onset (for various reasons) to participate as intended.
- I'm not sure in what context sustainability is being used if it is in regards to the agreement itself then use the answer above.
- My involvement in COA is very limited.
- They are laudible principles that have no place under COA. Beyond rhetoric, I would ask where any of these principles were applied because COA existed and was the delivery mechanism for that application. Existing programming, not COA, applies some of these principles where appropriate.
- Most of these principles are valid and should be retained in the next agreement. Continued heavy emphasis should be placed on Conservation, Ecosystem Approach, Precautionary Principle, Rehabilitation, and Science-based Management. Sustainability should be changed to Ecological Sustainability to make it more explicit.
- It appears that numerous resources are directed towards creating the organization to manage the agreement and it may be more beneficial to direct many of these resources towards actual results.

8. COMMENTS...

- I think the amalgamation of COA MC Secretariat and the AIC makes a lot of sense and I support this decision. It should be noted that the COA document actually talks about 3 Annex committees, but by the time the agreement was signed, the intention had changed and it was decided that only one Annex Implementation Committee would be formed. This made a lot more sense and avoided overlap.
- AIC has not addressed issues or not addressed them effectively and in a timely fashion.
- In my view Federal commitment to the program is not as strong as it once was. Quite possibly because B base funding has eroded as well as A base funding and remaining resources are “stretched” to the limit.
- As a front line implementer I had very little interaction with AIC or MC. We would hear back about key decisions and actions of course. Not sure how one would structure it differently. Perhaps the recent US strategy might offer some insight.
- MC should be focused more on next agreement than on the current one. Should be strategic planning and have next agreement strategic focuses ready so renewal proceeds efficiently and effectively. –how about rotating chairs to strengthen accountability and collaboration culture –how about a MC that is informed about key emerging issues and associated risks to COA goals by the experts –how about a MC that is evaluating resourcing strategies and strategic partnerships and initiatives for next agreement or longer –how about an MC that is looking at areas of common interest that could form the basis for a common one window approach in Ontario (eg. public outreach, one window access to key information, tools, experts to engage citizens and stakeholders in the cause).
- Good use of committees and cooperation.
- Look at the last MC minutes. As far as I can tell, nothing was accomplished. There is very little in terms of direction from either MC or AIC, seems that we just report into them but nothing comes back in terms of next steps or action. The agreement needs leadership in order to solve the piecemeal approach and we are not getting it.
- In some cases, others not organized.
- The structure is okay, however... It is a challenge to get everyone interested in all management aspects because the Agreement so heavily impacts the work of EC and MOE and only touches on the efforts of some of agencies. Management Committee could be more effective if it used its time to discuss strategy, united Canadian strategy for the Great Lakes. (e.g. going into binational meetings, positioning themselves in unity to approach government(s)) Currently, the Management committee does not make significant decisions/direction that impact implementation... this happens outside of the committee w/ interested parties and at times reported at the MC table (e.g. DFO – EC negotiations regarding transfer of fish monitoring activities and database). The management committees could use the It is difficult to fill a meeting with meaningful decision items. AIC uses time its time more effectively in terms of sharing ideas and looking for synergies, but have had a hard time articulating priority issues and corresponding recommendations to the MC... the relationship between these two committees should be examined.

8. The current management structure (i.e committees) is efficient and effective.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	5%	3
	Mostly Agree	40%	24
	Mostly Disagree	21.7%	13
	Strongly Disagree	13.3%	8
	Don't know	20%	12
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	61.7%	37
Total Respondents			60
(skipped this question)			3

- Concerned that COA is becoming a program unto itself and has the potential of reducing efficiency.
- MC is not as effective as it was anticipated. AIC is quite large.
- The challenges for the managers of the Great Lakes is working within a system that treats the Great Lakes as a “special issue” and so it’s normally outside the BAU of both levels of government and so doesn’t get the same level of attention from management as it should.
- Given the complexity of the governance of the GLB I think it works very well.
- Current management structure is built on a complex network of committees from COA MC to implementation at the RAP and LAMPS. These committees exist at different scales, structures and effectiveness in both time and space.
- Workshops have not been that valuable. COA AIC reasonably effective. Need to have a forum to engage non-managers into the COA framework. Project managers need to see where their work fits under COA*.
- Frequent change in management structure of the committees (AIC) has hampered momentum and continuity of action –need more engagement of agencies at the implementation (AIC)level. Communications process (for publications) needs to be better defined under next COA.
- Current structure is far too complex and layered. The agreement and it’s actions do not require that many levels, but do require the support of the various participants.
- The committees, from my perspective, are disconnected to the majority of the work we do – their role seems to be solely that of reporting – there needs to be better two way communication. Staff have no idea as to what is being discussed in mgt committees. I don’t think I have ever seen any meeting minutes – we only get requests for filling out various tables for reporting purposes (plan, progress,etc).
- Concept of having technical teams and a management steering committee at lake level is effective.
- My involvement in COA is very limited.
- Far too much process and far too little results/action. For example, MC is too high level, too poorly informed, and too concerned to avoid costly commitments to make meaningful decisions.
- An oft heard refrain was “What does the mgmt Secretariat do?”. The implementation issues and priorities were brought forth in a disjointed colouring scheme that addressed none of those issues, generated a mgmt response of direction and limited ensuing debates. The Annex level working groups received expectations but rarely had the channel available for feedback, suggestions and concerns.
- There seem to be too many layers of bureaucracy involved in the management and administration of the agreement. Accountability is a valid principle, but top-heavy bureaucracy is not.
- Committee’s are often large – but for the most part effective. They sometimes result in long meetings but allow for good networking

9. COMMENTS...

- Secretariats, particularly joint secretariats are necessary to move the process forward. The AIC and COA MC Secretariat merger appears to be a good one.
- Our interactions with AIC secretariat were generally quite good as we encountered these people on a regular basis. The MC secretariat on the Provincial side was a total mystery. Other than briefing notes there seemed to be little contact or interaction between the MC secretariat and those delivering on COA for MOE.
- MC should read up on what their role is supposed to be per the agreement, specifically bullets 1 and 2.
- The secretariats work is constricted to the actions, direction, commitments and responsibilities of the management structure... improvements there would trickle down to the secretariats. Secretariats have done a good job and taking at times unclear direction and lack of membership commitment and driving forward to fulfill the Agreements administrative commitments.
- Administrative structure has the potential to become unwieldy.
- AN overt focus upon tracking the status of milestones was excellent for accountability but did not aid the parties in creating a living, breathing GL program in Ontario – the secretariat needs to complement the parties to help them build support for the GL in their organizations.
- Have not had much interaction with the administrative structure.
- merging of the MC and AIC secretariats is a step forward.
- Again, too complex and layered. Too multi-actioned and too confusing to those who participate. Results in wasted efforts, repetition and a great sense of frustration. Needs to be streamlined... somehow.
- I have no idea what the secretariate does.
- Although I believe we should be accountable for the money we spend, in year reporting seems excessive.
- Sorry just don't know the system to comment.
- My involvement in COA is very limited.
- There is no need for separate secretariats for AIC and MC – inefficient duplication of bureaucracy.
- See above. COA needs dedicated leadership and the flexibility to address emerging opportunities. Note the CWA caveats on the GL. COA personnel did not contribute to that outcome. COA participants need to be empowered as GL champions, visionaries, representatives, negotiators as well as worker bees.
- Administrative load is too high/most of AIC is tied up with administration and reporting responsibilities that take away from the implementation of the agreement.
- It is definitely effective but possibly not so effective.

9. The current administrative structure (i.e. secretariats) is efficient and effective.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	3.3%	2
	Mostly Agree	33.3%	20
	Mostly Disagree	20%	12
	Strongly Disagree	8.3%	5
	Don't know	35%	21
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	43.3%	26
Total Respondents			60
(skipped this question)			3

10. The Parties work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion with each other and partners to achieve the objectives of the Agreement.

	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree	11.7%	7
Mostly Agree	68.3%	41
Mostly Disagree	11.7%	7
Strongly Disagree	1.7%	1
Don't know	6.7%	4
View Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	46.7%	28
Total Respondents		60
(skipped this question)		3

10. COMMENTS...

- There are sometimes minor disagreements but in general, the Parties work very well together.
- I am not convinced that there is effective bi-lateral implementation of the program. There is a semblance of cooperation but when push comes to shove each Party acts in what they perceive to be their best interests as opposed to the best interest of the resource(s).
- I thought the implementation level interactions with EC, MNR, DFO and OMAF were generally pretty good. It took time to establish teams and working relationships but on the whole it functioned well. With MNR clarifying its Great

Lakes structure and EC getting a new one in place it would help if the other Parties clearly articulated their organization's vision for the Great Lakes and its place in their structure.

- Challenges – to maintain momentum, partner confidence and collaboration when resources are slim.
- Depends on the “Parties”– some “Parties” more committed than others. See answer to question #3.
- Integration continue to be a challenge due to lack of formal mechanisms for communications.
- Most targets are independant and don't require working together, but they may complement each other.
- Coordinated yes but not integrated.
- At the field level there is much interaction between Agency representatives (Lake Advisers, Coordinators) and partners.
- Staff level cooperation good but senior managements in some agency departments have hampered free flow of information and/or cooperative action.
- As always, there are some parties who do not participate to the extent that others do... they do not bring forward information as requested, do not attend meetings, etc... and then are usually the first to whine about it at the end of the day.
- Room for improvement in this area.
- Administrative reporting required by MOE seems too detailed with little value-added.
- On the ground, it's unclear to me if this is really happening at the delivery level.
- Statement is true at the workplanning level but there is still some room for improvement at the project level.
- Still a disconnect between the various agencies on shared outcomes
- This is certainly the case for our Hamilton Harbour RAP.
- Party and partnership participation is critical to the success of the programs.
- Within MNR we worked fairly well and with CA's to some extent but it certainly wasn't clear the integration with MOE, EC etc.
- At the technical level this is happening, although it would probably be happening anyway. e.g. collaborative work between MOE and EC would take place with or without the agreement.
- The parties are cordial to each other but pursue their own agency priorities with little regard for COA.
- Difficult to assess as there are numerous activities ongoing at the same time; cooperation and coordination likely high at the working level but not clear at the management level.

11. COMMENTS...

- The other partners sometimes accomplish more than the actual parties to the Agreement (i.e. municipalities, since they are local, on-the ground and have the responsibility, resources and authority to make decisions and take the necessary actions).
- The Parties know they are being watched and that enhances their own accountability. Stakeholders can be unrealistic and some seem to live in a make believe world of unlimited resources.
- I think we fail to acknowledge that in some places the other partners are ahead of the Parties when it comes to implementation. For example, downloading of Provincial responsibilities to municipalities makes them more important partners than we give them credit for. We need to remember that the other partners are generally more concerned about implementing a RAP or LaMP than they are about dancing to our COA tune. COA is generally regarded as one source of provincial funding. Others such as infrastructure may be more important to the implementation of some aspects of COA.
- Partners were acted as service providers, and mostly charged admin fees. Partners should be bringing in kind or resources to the table, not benefiting from COA.
- Don't know of all of the NGO's or what they are doing.
- They are heavily involved, but they probably don't know it because the management framework of the Great Lakes is not clearly defined (ie. NGOs involved in a GLSF project, or a RAP project could very well have no idea what COA is).
- Limited involvement of NGO's and others outside MOE/MNR and EC/DFO was evident
- As reflected through their involvement in individual RAPs.
- Success of COA depends on our partners to help influence individual actions - especially on a landscape that is privately owned and managed.
- There does not appear to be much involvement in COA by NGOs. Would help if AIC could have some contact with GLIC as well as NGOs (periodic meetings).
- Annex 2 is a good example. Also rehab work requires other partners.
- If you take away the lack of understanding and the confusion about the many layers of the formal agreement and it's structure, and the frustration over what and who exactly is responsible for portions of the activities – I think there is a general sense of responsibility and desire to become involved and assist the provincial and federal governments in making a difference to one of the most recognizable resources in the province.
- Good to see Stewardship Ontario heavily involved bringing in many additional partners and landowners. Need to do more to bring CA's on side as cooperating partners in implementation.
- This is certainly the case for our Hamilton Harbour RAP.
- Again, Partnership and non-governmental organization participation is critical to the success of the programs.
- They are not welcome at the table.
- Other than GLIC there does not appear to be any NGO or other unidentified partners involved. GLIC doesn't appear to be making a difference. Good example to follow for future COA would be the provincial Drinking Water Advisory Council (Jim Merrit Chair, Pat Lachmaniuk MOE Liaison). That committee actually provide technical reviews and advice but doesn't interfere with the business.
- Some ngo's have been invited to participate but have declined due to what they call the slow process to achieve results – most ngo's that I associate with are very hands on and find the committee process cumbersome.

11. Other partners and non-governmental organizations are involved and are making a difference in the implementation of the Agreement.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	33.3%	20
	Mostly Agree	33.3%	20
	Mostly Disagree	20%	12
	Strongly Disagree	3.3%	2
	Don't know	10%	6
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	41.7%	25
Total Respondents			60
(skipped this question)			3

12. Reasonable and measurable outcomes have been identified to monitor progress and report on the achievement of commitments and results for each Annex.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		10%	6
Mostly Agree		55%	33
Mostly Disagree		21.7%	13
Strongly Disagree		3.3%	2
Don't know		8.3%	5
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	41.7%	25
Total Respondents			60
(skipped this question)			3






12. COMMENTS....

- Only through the “bounding exercise” of the AIC (not in the agreement itself).
- The outcomes are severely limited by the inputs (resources- -fiscal and human). The main impediment to more rapid remedial progress is the limited amount of resources (human and monetary) we can apply to the problems.
- It is my understanding that high level needs for measurable outcomes were satisfied by the performance indicators.
- Depends on the Annex- good, reasonable and measurable outcomes for AOC Annex-other Annexes’ outcomes purposely vague/unmeasurable.
- Great great strides have been made over the course of COA on this. There remains a lack of consequence for not reporting accurately (e.g. internal Traffic-light reporting). Another challenge is that project managers are being asked to report in many different ways to many different people on the same project... efficiency could be increased by combining some of the reporting requirements (e.g. COA work planning input, COA work planning internal assessments, internal traffic-light reporting, public progress reporting... not to mention internal agency reporting pressures).
- For results yes, for commitments needs to be improved.
- The agreement does have a good accountability framework for the actual commitments.
- it should be recognized that not all activities would be able to demonstrate that expected outcomes have been attained during the life of the COA.
- Both the goals and objectives, as well as the measurable outcomes are broadly defined within the context of the Great Lakes; therefore the reporting progress is accomplished at the same level – simplifying the complexity of the issues.
- These were developed after the fact and not thought about when the agreement was written. Next agreement should have clear measurable outcomes.
- Should be established when the agreement is drafted (not after the fact): expected result (what) + commitment (how to achieve the result) + how to measure that the commitment and/or result is achieved.
- I think this is a false statement. This is what has come to be the interpretation of the parties involved throughout the 5 year duration of this agreement. It is NOT provided for in the current structure or management of the current COA.
- The result statements are broad and thus measurable outcomes (results) are difficult. Need improvement here.
- See previous comments on vagueness issue.
- Those measures were retrofitted to justify how low the bar to sound environmental. ecological mgmt had been set.
- question as to “reasonable” – appears that implementation challenges were not thoroughly identified in the beginning and as such some critical outcomes cannot be met; largely due to lack of sufficient funding eg. STP upgrades. Also funding distribution amongst agencies (eg the 50M) did not provide the funding necessary for the agencies to meet the commitments eg monitoring and reporting; staffing not provided to deliver commitments, funding restricted to 3 yrs only etc. // need realistic review of resource requirements before commitments are made; if funding not provided, agreement needs to be modified. // seek funding and resources before agreement is finalized.
- The creation of performance measures has helped track outcomes much better.
- See previous comment on performance measures.

13. COMMENTS...

- Sometimes the issues are beyond the control of the members of the MC. For example, the infrastructure challenges. INFC or MPIR are not members of the COA MC but could have a great influence on getting funds to AOCs. Infrastructure funding for upgrading water or waste water treatment plants are often the remaining actions left in AOCs.
- Process may be in place but outcomes are not there.
- I would assume that it is the responsibility of AIC to communicate emerging issues and concerns to the MC.
- If this were the case, risk assessment approach would be used and a strategic framework to guide COA renewal would be in place now.
- As everything is up for interpretation, the traffic light report is misleading. As it was so discouraged to report any reds or yellows most of the greens are inaccurate if you were to take a good faith interpretation of the expected results. If you are not allowed to point out issues nothing will change.
- Mixed assessment. MC meeting twice a year is not an effective mechanism for “timely” responses. MC Executive provides more timely direction. MC is effective for long range direction.
- The only emerging issues they can deal with is where the commitments won’t be met – not able to address emerging scientific or technical issues.
- The network provides sufficient information required to identify and assess emerging issues. Our ability to respond depends on direct human (voter) impact. Habitat loss, soil erosion were issues identified over 100 years ago and remain key issues in the current COA agreement
- There are instances where the top down approach prevented information that should have gone up from being provided for direction. They don’t always want to know... and the high level requirement for information often prevent detail that is too complex or lengthy from being brought forward for discussion or direction. Not everything can be made simple when it involves highly scientific and technical details. The time and effort should be made to become familiar and to understand, even if on a basic level. It matters.
- Not sure if they meet often enough and have action oriented sessions.
- Over the long term this statement may be true but over the short term of a 5 year agreement it is difficult to justify major revisions to the workplan, without an influx of money.
- This is in place only at the local level. I don’t believe the MC has the capacity to direct or respond to emerging issues.
- Water supply to meet demand is expected to be the major issue this century. Environment Canada has expressed this. Related topics are Walkerton and Source Water Protection, Ontario Low Water Response and the Great Lakes Charter and a its Annex. Are these emerging issues being addressed by COA? There are a few projects looking at Low Water Concerns.
- As mentioned, MC is too high level and too averse to commitments.
- I don’t even know where that discussion would take place within the COA tent. Older emerging issues have been allowed to fester (ie invasive species and contaminated sediments) even though the economic sense of proactive mgmt is obvious. Also, emerging opportunities are completely ignored.
- MC has not provide this service and is mainly an approvals mechanism; processes not in place to do anything more than that mainly due to timing of meetings and large amount of admin needed for preparation. Role of MC needs to be reviewed and revised if this is to be effective.

13. The Management Committee has the processes in place to identify, assess and respond to emerging issues and concerns.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	3.4%	2
	Mostly Agree	27.1%	16
	Mostly Disagree	30.5%	18
	Strongly Disagree	6.8%	4
	Don't know	33.9%	20
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	33.9%	20
Total Respondents			59
(skipped this question)			4

14. The staff of the Parties of the Agreement have the authority and tools they need to make decisions and take action.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		1.7%	1
Mostly Agree		51.7%	31
Mostly Disagree		23.3%	14
Strongly Disagree		3.3%	2
Don't know		16.7%	10
View Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)		40%	24
Total Respondents			60
(skipped this question)			3

14. COMMENTS....

- As above.
- All a matter of extent.
- The decisions taken must be tempered by the reality of what can be done.
- I seem to have a fair amount of autonomy provided that my actions are consistent with the COA, LaMPs or RAPs I am involved in. Obviously there have to be some checks and balances on financial matters and I have not found these to be too onerous. Recent changes (at MOE) allowing us to carry over funding will be a real benefit.
- It is challenging to have technical COA documents approved and released.
- They likely have the tools and authority as written in the agreement but I don't feel they are adequately informed of any opportunities where decisions or course changes should be made.
- Where no COA resources are administered to a department, sometimes difficult to action on regional issues.
- I think COA gives the senior managers lots of authority but they often don't use it to the betterment of the Great Lakes.
- As long as these remain within predetermined budgets and time lines.
- Not adequately resourced specially on the Province's side.
- Decision making and taking actions within the current system of networks of committees, partnerships and land owner volunteerism, is subject to the powers of influence. The tools required to influence resource management include leadership and role government plays in committing to cleaning-up the Great Lakes; resources (funding) to support actions; communication – accurate and timely; maintaining partnerships and networks; providing sound reasoning for prioritizing actions.
- Occasionally staff are hampered by agency specific priorities determined at the senior management level.
- For the most part, resources and dollars are lacking in all areas that are required. As a result, other important business has had to be dropped in order to carry out work. Also, the inability to retain expert staff in key areas is a detrimental reality.
- Often it is the resources that are lacking not the tools or authority.
- C'mon... see above. There is no internal critical debate. As a result there is zero connection between the staff to mgmt to policy and political leadership. If the authorities and tools do not exist outside of COA, they won't exist because of COA.
- There are situations where staff cannot make decisions, because of political sensitivities and agendas, differences between provincial and federal mandates and jurisdiction, etc.
- For the most part this is true except where non management staff are at the table when managers are not available to attend meetings.
- This is a weakness within my organization.

15. COMMENTS

- Often, the decision-making is pushed down to the AIC level or individual departments or ministries.
- No.
- COA is a good democratic forum that has been in existence since the seventies. All parties to the COA are challenged by their fiscal limitations.
- Still concerned about the integration of the front line staff with decisions. Need to think about consultation with staff, as well as stakeholders. An example was the rather sudden “pronouncement” that COA capital had to be spent only on sediment projects. This created problems in some AOCs and was never discussed with staff.
- MC should be more strategic focused on next agreement! AIC should be dealing with managing current agreement. -Rotate MC chairs! -Risk Assessment approach to priority and target setting.
- No clear decisions makers, how can you jmake decisions on issues in a committee structure. Perhaps more structure is required at the meeting themselves where issues are allowed to be tabled and then proposed actions are voted on (instead of just “considered”).
- As it’s largely consensus based the decision making supports the targets and outcomes adequately.
- There is always room for improvement.
- Would like to see stronger leadership by the parties and better communication among and within the committees.
- Other than the fact that decision makers may not always have all the information they require to make appropriate decisions. NOR is information always brought forward in a timely manner to ensure decisions are made according to schedules that will allow actions to be carried out. The decision makers do not always have the time/desire to become fully briefed on issues that are more complex than others by nature. And staff do not always have the time to dedicate to providing the best information, as it is requested.
- As I indicated in an earlier comment, it seems that MNR is a minor voice in the decision making process when compared to EC and MOE.
- At the basin/unit level.
- Are all the COA objectives being addressed? We certainly do what is being addressed well.
- I see very little evidence of actual management decision making. There is certainly an abundance of administrative decision making however.
- It has been a post-decision rationalization of non-decisions and existing programs. At the very least, COA should more clearly identify specific responsibilities that need to be addressed in base government programming (monitoring, info mgmt, liaison into municipalities and related initiatives.
- MOE decision making processes well defined and supported by those involved. Agency priorities and commitments for COA need to be confirmed up front.

15. I am satisfied with the decision-making processes in COA.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		6.7%	4
Mostly Agree		40%	24
Mostly Disagree		23.3%	14
Strongly Disagree		8.3%	5
Don't know		21.7%	13
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	38.3%	23
Total Respondents			60
(skipped this question)			3

16. Effective tools and mechanisms are in place to improve collaboration on priorities, track progress and report on achievements.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		6.7%	4
Mostly Agree		51.7%	31
Mostly Disagree		28.3%	17
Strongly Disagree		3.3%	2
Don't know		10%	6
View Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)		33.3%	20
Total Respondents			60
(skipped this question)			3

16. COMMENTS...

- There is a lot of confusion as to whom is responsible for what.
- The most important and effective mechanisms will be consistency in program resources and delivery. We have developed some good networks and working relationships since 2002. If we really want to move forward we should build on these and ensure that commitments to the programs continue. The biggest pain for stakeholders is when the agencies start stepping in or out of LaMP and RAP processes.

- Confusion about the priorities of Parties is also problematic. A good example is MOE's current Source Protection program which to date has not been well integrated with Great Lakes activities. The stakeholders wonder what we are up to and have not had a reasonable explanation to date.
- What happens if province doesn't provide COA funding next round? Are these tools and mechanisms as efficient and effective as they could be?
- There was a project tracking database at one time but unsure whether it is still in use.
- The tools and mechanisms are in place... the challenge is for them to be used effectively.
- Improvements to intra and inter-agency reporting.
- Not really sure on this one.
- Lots of room for improvement. Please see previous comments.
- Reporting, esp through various databases is not as certain as it could be in that the timelines for inputting detail and projects, etc are not the same across the agencies. In order to meet one deadline, inaccurate or unconfirmed info is submitted... and there is never time to go back and edit. Each agency works on their own fiscal schedule, their own workplan schedule, their own political schedules, etc. etc. For the most part this can't be avoided, but it is still a deterrent.
- BEC needs to take a stronger interest in COA.
- The mechanism is in place but there is additional collaboration that needs to take place with other gov't agencies.
- As stated, most collaborative undertakings are driven at the technical level – although the agreement administrative bureaucracy does a decent job of reporting on achievements.
- Great effort was spent trying to develop such tools to track progress and report on achievements. Anyone reporting on failures? Has it all been 100% successful. Is that a balanced approach to reporting? We'll tell you the good news, not the bad. Balanced and reality based is a little more credible.
- Although I understand the need for oversight, the reporting frequency and requirements are onerous, at times.

17. COMMENTS....

- Planning and reporting results very labour intensive. Suggest including less detail and grouping of results.
- I have not seen timely or strategic input from this committee.
- AIC secretariat did a great job of trying to interpret the goals/results into measureable targets. Blackcreek workshop on PMs was a very effective way of coordinating the assessments with all rep agencies present. More group meetings like this would improve information exchange between agencies.
- Lots of assessments/evaluations – limited actions.
- Need better communication, collaboration and leadership.
- Given what they've had to work with, yes.
- Difficult to answer this question as I don't recall seeing any information in this regard at my level.
- My concerns is with ensuring all out COA objectives are addressed. Perhaps more resources are needed to cover all objectives.
- As stated, MC is too high level. AIC has tried to provide a forum for re-evaluating objectives, but the vagueness of many of them have made this difficult.
- See above but not at all.
- There seems to be little emphasis on evaluating results on a regular basis and making adjustments / amendments against established objectives at the MC levels. Working groups seem to be effective in coordination of technical/ scientific matters.

17. The COA Management Committees (MC, AIC, secretariats and working groups) have done an effective job of coordinating assessments, evaluating the results and recommending amendments against established objectives.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		3.4%	2
Mostly Agree		44.1%	26
Mostly Disagree		16.9%	10
Strongly Disagree		3.4%	2
Don't know		32.2%	19
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	20.3%	12
Total Respondents			59
(skipped this question)			4

18. The various reports produced under the Agreement (Progress Reports, State of the Lakes, Citizen's Guide etc) are meaningful, reliable and accurate, timely and written using plain language.

	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree	6.7%	4
Mostly Agree	55%	33
Mostly Disagree	23.3%	14
Strongly Disagree	1.7%	1
Don't know	11.7%	7
View Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	43.3%	26
Total Respondents		60
(skipped this question)		3

18. COMMENTS...

- Preparation of reports and agency approval of these documents is one area where we need to improve and streamline the process.
- The first COA progress report took much much longer than expected given the leadership on the file. GLIC was the responsibility of EC and the progress report was the responsibility of the MOE. There were many problems with the process... the contract writer, the willingness of AIC members to review and approve the text etc. It should be noted that the State of the Lakes reports are produced by BEC not COA MC. Not sure why this was ever identified in COA.

- I am not familiar with many reports produced under COA.
- Most COA reports issued to date are way overdue or written for such a generic audience that they have little meaning. Serious stakeholders place little value on this sort of thing. I suspect

the truly informed public will turn to NGO efforts such as the recent Prescription for the Great Lakes for their information. This is hugely problematic for the agencies. Not sure whether this question includes LaMP Updates which I regard as a GLWQA product rather than COA. It seems to me that BEC is responsible for the LaMP publications.

- State of Lakes, LaMP, RAP reports would happen even if there wasn't an agreement.
- Not to sure who the audience is with respect to these documents.
- Focus of COA Progress Reporting is on "good news"/"communicating progress" – not based on facts/reality. "Spin" is more important than "substance".
- Citizen's Guide is a good tool. "COA Reports" however haven't found their niche... in relation to RAP reports, LaMP reports, SOLEC, GLBTS reports, GL federal program reports, agency fact-sheets.
- Not timely, and not all were good documents for a target public audience.
- Generally good materials have been prepared – but it is challenging to put the entire GL into context and identify how the COA makes a difference.
- May not be as timely as the general public expects.
- I can't say that I have seen all the reports, but what I have seen appear to be accurate. I am not aware if all internal reporting on progress is shared amongst all Agencies.
- First round of progress reports was not timely. not known whether new process is an improvement.
- This question should be addressed to our constituents and not those that have provided input to the reports.
- Timeliness could be improved.
- The only report I have seen and reviewed in detail is the 2002-2003 Biennial Progress report, which I found to be well written and understandable.
- I only see the progress report's put out by the local technical teamns at a basin level nothing at a broad Prov/Federal scale, have never seen the citizens guide
- I think we need to do 1-2 page reports for the public – Gr 8 level.
- Progress Reporting is as meaningful as can be expected when the targets are vague.
- They are public relation ploys lacking context and vision and balance. We have real problems that require real solutions based on germane and open debate.
- What has been produces has been useful but does not due justice to the amount of work going into the program. Regular reporting on progress is lacking. Need to have better mechanism for reporting on findings and progress to the public and scientific community. Presently reporting is done as part each agency's regular program and it is difficult to contribute achievements to COA.
- Need to better articulate the challenges and where we have not been as successful.

19. COMMENTS...

- Updating our GReat Lakes Program paradigm to meaningfully address key issues such as invasive species, sub-urban sprawl and climate change – we need to make our “remedially” minded program much more pro-active and focussed on sustainability.
- The Agreement needs stronger bounds that are publicly prescribed. It also needs better communications. I’m not convinced that COA is understood by people other than the actual parties to the Agreement.
- Funding support is the principle challenge for improving the effectiveness of the Agreement. We have developed strong effective partnerships within the basin (Canada-RAPs and internationally-LaMPS). Only through continued funding can we maintain and increase this momentum of “partnershiping” to more areas and issues within the Grt. Lakes basin. We need to build on developing partnerships in non-AOC areas to help with habitat conservation and rehabilitation, and to further reduce non-point source and tributary loadings of pollutants. Take a more holistic lake by lake view of habitat/wlldlife management rather than a place by place view. Understanding the effects of invasive species is a priority (e.g. eeffects on lower food web). We need to know whether or not there are aspects of their impacts that can be managed in a way that will protect native species of fish and wildlife. Greater effort needs to be focused on the reduction of long-range atmospheric deposition of pollutants. This will require a broader North American view of Great Lakes issues.
- Identifying the priorities and working with reduced resources.
- Restricting new program resources to (again) focus on AOCs at the expense of needed whole lake monitoring and other programs is (again) ridiculous (short sighted, politically driven). Water quantity management especially with respect to the demands likely to come out of the US is the next big issue – and perhaps the most important issue of this millenium. AIS will continue to be a problem – we must not become bored with it and abandon it (as we did with acid rain) when it ceases to be media sexy. We need to maintain our contaminant monitoring and a suite of other ecosystem indicators. Our past successes re contaminants and phosphorous management must not be forgotten and we will never be able to close the book on them (as we did with acid rain). Also we are now seeing a substantial number of retirements of people who spent their whole careers on the program. Do the Parties have a plan to ensure that the (invaluable)data bases they collected will not disappear? These people represent the corporate memory of this program. Many have 30+ years invested. I expect this is happening on both sides of the border. A strategy is needed to ensure the information and knowledge they contributed does not depart when they leave.
- Unclear political commitment is certainly an issue. One would hope that we would have clear direction from on high fairly soon. The Parties also need to articulate their organizational commitment fairly soon. The Agreement also needs to involve some additional Parties. Municipal affairs and Public infrastructure need to be at the table. We may as well invite Conservation Authorities as the Province seems to have given them the lead for watershed resource management. I think the recent attention to the Great Lakes through the Annex negotiations, the US Regional Collaborative Strategy and various NGO coalitions bodes well for public

19. What are the major challenges and opportunities for improving the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the Agreement.

View	Total Respondents	56
	(skipped this question)	7

awareness. The formation of the Great Lakes Cities Coalition is both a challenge and opportunity. It suggest that large cities do not feel that there interests are being addressed adequately by government agencies. We need to rethink some assumptions about the Parties to COA being the key players in Great Lakes remediation. I think we are in for some surprises in the coming years.



- COA MC focused more on 5-20 years out so COA renewal can proceed efficiently. Maintaining momentum between agreements when no new funding or slim resources. Arm's length GL Ecosystem Mgt. Center to for citizen and stakeholder engagement, information synthesis, strategic grant programs to ensure sustainability of key resources to maintain momentum and continuous progress on strategic priorities, support integrated planning and policy development.
- A higher level of federal departmenatl commitments for resourcing and collaborating on the COA.
- See comment No. 1.
- Establishing a clear lead group that are INTERESTED AND ENGAGED in making progress and promoting collaboration between the agencies. Should be a more active role, dedicated full time job(s). Would really improve things if the Lake leads and DEDICATED coordinators had a direct line of accountability within the agreement instead of "once removed", i.e. through MC. Perhaps AIC should be MC as they are more in touch with the issues and actions to address issues but don't have the same authority in the agreement itself to implement actions. Also clearer/measurable targets should be set that can be realistically be achieved instead of "flimsy" commitments that are up for interpretation.
- Lack of money.
- Need for greater Aboriginal involvement in COA development.
- Challenges The competitive and conflicting mandates/agendas of various government and private interests. Funding is stretched too thin which allows little to no flexibility to address many current problems. Opportunity COA has some good mechanisms in place... it needs to find its niche in the Great Lakes management/decision making.
- Management Committee to be effective needs a firm role at the decision-making level compariable to the normal authority carried by the participants. if this is not feasible then the program should be managed at a Director not ADM/RDG level.
- 1 – getting the 2 gov't workplanning processes to align better – collaboration more generally rather than special projects as per the present COA – target key areas where existing gov't activities don't cut the mustard – STPs, stormwater, planning, exotic species as noted earlier warrant special collaborative action to identify the risks and the fixes.
- A major challenge is that some of the targets/goals will take decades to come to fruition, if at all, yet the COA sets targets/goals for the life of the agreement. It may be difficult, therefore, to demonstrate achievement or significant progress towards a target in the life span of the CAO particularly as rapid increases of development in and around already highly urbanized areas places increased loads on the environment where infrastruture demands outpace existing capacities.
- The Agreement to be really effective, the two parties have to commit adeqaute level of resources.
- Need more resources (staff, dollars)for implementation and administration.

- I think the administration of COA is very good considering the complexity of the governance. It still tends to be a bottom up process more than top down, I'm not sure there has been adequate gap analysis in the process of identifying priorities on a basin-wide level. The major challenge will be responding to new priorities that will arise from the review of the GLWQ Agreement, particularly if there are no incremental resources.
- Sustaining the health of the Great Lakes for generations to come is a long-term commitment beyond 5 years cycles. Cleaning-up the Great Lakes requires long-term leadership and commitments and resources to maintain and influence partnership and individual actions. Addressing economic and social development within the scope of ecological sustainability – population growth/urban/rural development Legislative tools and policies should not hinder habitat protection/restoration activities.
- Incorporating future threats to the Great Lakes such as climate change, water level fluctuations and invasive species. Loss of corporate memory over the next five years with projected retirements will provide the biggest management challenge to having an effective agreement.
- Opportunities: Strong leadership of the parties – clear commitment to achieve results. Concentration on fewer key results that can be translated into achievable and measurable commitments by the parties. Better communication among parties and working groups as well as with external agencies (GLIC and NGOs).
- Maintain focus on the Great Lakes. Finding the right balance of specificity and flexibility to allow adaptive management to occur. Planning for 5 year deliverables when so much is dependent on others whom you have little or no control requires flexibility. This makes accountability difficult – except to the process.
- Need to take into account EC's new governance structure.
- Administration and management structure... need to be streamlined. Right now too much time and effort is spent on information processing and document preparations for committees, etc and not enough effort to on the ground actions that can have an impact and make a difference... whether it be consultation, education, or research/monitoring.
- 1) appropriate measures of success/achievement that recognize realistic timelines given the nature of the problems 2) integrating the vast activities and accounting for success 3) current approach to measuring success does not provide incentives or encourage to reach beyond minimums 4) need better mechanism for tracking projects/success that have multiple benefits (i.e. not only to COA. 5) There could be consideration of performance measures/process that condier actions across multiple agreements.
- As per earlier comments, there is a disconnect between staff on the ground doing COA work and various committees in place. Improve communication as to what the various committees/groups are doing – at least circulate minutes.
- governance issues and adequacy of funds. support to local organizations
- Maintaining the capacity built up around partners in the current agreement as one waits for the renewal. Moving from reactive restoration projects to more proactive preventative type projects Dealing with climate change and invasives as major threats.

- Review of recommendations related to current delivery of agreement could improve a future agreement and its delivery.
- I think one of the major challenges associated with the current COA is mechanism in which MNR receives, tracks and reports on its COA funding (i.e. spending authority). The current financial structure is inefficient and causes unnecessary workloads on project leads, coordinators and financial staff.
- Urban planning and stormwater runoff are issues that may be addressed by engaging the Ministry of Municipal Affairs as a party to the agreement, thereby more effectively getting the word out to local municipalities. One major challenge to the effectiveness of the agreement is the conflicting priorities of the Ministries. For example the promotion of the Drainage Act by OMAF is in direct conflict with MNR's mandate of preserving and restoring wetlands. Furthermore, water taking legislation administered by MOE hinders the re-establishment of wetlands in some circumstances. I believe it is also important to review some of the provincial legislation (such as the NMA) and revise that legislation so that municipalities have the authority to establish by-laws that are more restrictive in an effort to preserve or protect water quality.
- We need to understand more fully how the other agencies are completing actions to fulfill their goals under COA. It seems that the only organization that is being held accountable is OMNR.
- Maintaining continuity and momentum – Ensuring that funding can be kept in place to allow this to happen.
- As stated in earlier comments providing local input directly from RAPs would be helpful and providing some information or a working session on just how COA and its committees and secretariats function would help with the local understanding.
- We have an opportunity to take advantage of the current interest by the Parties in water quantity issues (Walkerton/Source Water Protection, Great Lakes Charter, Drought/ Low Water) to ensure that we adequately address these emerging issues under COA by making the connection relating water quality to water quantity.
- More collaboration between all parties involved, especially in making data & information readily discoverable and accessible.
- Collaborate on identification of priorities the next agreement should focus on using a prioritization framework that is risk based up front. Establish meaningful measures of effectiveness up front and implement mechanisms to report on the measures.
- Better integration and support from MOE.
- The most successful COA structure mirrored the GLWQA Annexes so the best solution to the current process-rich-but-result-poor situation would be to start over by going back to the GLWQA. It would also be more honest and accountable if funding under the Agreement were restricted to big-ticket remedial/abatement actions that would not normally be covered under agency regular program funding. Using COA resources to support regular agency monitoring or abatement activity should be shut down. Agency funding for core programs should not be dressed up as new COA commitments, although they could be identified and credited as useful to achieving COA goals.

- Bring in the players-municipalities and CAs. Set strong incentives for using GL as a reference point for municipal planning and actions. List the top 10 issues facing the Cdn side of the Basin and set priorities accordingly. Improve State Province liaisons... where is the GLC under COA? Good program management has an element of constant internal debate and external negotiations to improve the product and outcomes. We sign a document every five years and call that management? Hardly. Provide feedback to the IJC and GLWQA as they are part of our reference points and objectives. The GLWQA is due for renegotiation. What will the COA community say about that? The Annex Charter got signed. What did the COA community have to say about that? The GL Cities Initiative and the GL Mayors Ass'n amalgamated. What did the COA community say? What did they do to come to that table and make contributions consistent with the overall goal of sound environmental mgmt in the Basin? Nothing nothing nothing and nothing. There need to be clear leaders of COA who can be approached and make decisions. COA needs sufficient flexibility in its terms to allow for repositioning or reprioritizing where and when appropriate. Linkages to other initiatives need to be created as the term of the Agreement is underway. Again, another reason for clarity for COA leadership. Frankly beyond rhetoric, a person would find it difficult to say what our collective vision and policies are on the GL's.
- The desire for consultation with the public can be difficult to achieve, given the political sensitivities of some projects, or the existence of related non-COA projects occurring with overlapping but non-coincident timelines and mandates. Aside from that, the work being achieved under this Agreement is significant, and many elements of the current Agreement should be incorporated into the next Agreement.
- Demonstrating progress on a more regular basis.
- The major challenge is acquiring the necessary resources to make real change. Another challenge is to ensure the agreement is truly ecosystem based.
- More clearly defined and measurable commitments – let's not lose momentum by letting it lapse again – need funding for other program areas – invasives, habitat acquisition, etc.

20. Whom do you work for?

		Response Percent	Response Total
Federal Government		31.1%	19
Provincial Government		67.2%	41
Municipal Government		0%	0
First Nations		0%	0
ENGO's/NGO's		0%	0
Private Sector		0%	0
Educational Institution		0%	0
View Other (please specify)		1.6%	1
Total Respondents			61
(skipped this question)			2

EXTERNAL SURVEY

1. COMMENTS.....

- Wrote much of it in 1999-2000 (krantzberg).
- Joined Steel producers association in January 2005 and have had other issues to deal with.
- SOLEC, GLBTS, Niagara Region Sustainable Water initiative.
- We have received COA funding from MOE and MNR.
- As Conservation Authorities umbrella organization, Conservation Ontario's involvement has been indirect in that we coordinate and communicate information to Conservation Authorities.
- In the period from 1985-1992 the COA Agreement was more familiar to environmentalists, particular those working on RAP public advisory committees. The public engagement with the agreement evaporated with the loss of opportunity to influence RAP implementation and the loss of a culture of inclusion at the IJC and governments. I sat on an Advisory Committee to the federal government on their Great Lakes Programs that lapsed with no explanation.
- As a CA, this is the first request for comments on the COA we have received. As an agency we have reviewed the Great Lakes Annex Agreement.
- We have had the opportunity through partnerships to assist in the delivery of COA Results relating to invasive species, atlantic salmon restoration and fish and wildlife habitat rehabilitation. Our staff have also participated on the Great Lakes Innovation Committee.
- Although the organization I work for has been involved with COA for some time I have only become involved over the last year.

1. How much involvement have you had with the Canada-Ontario Agreement?			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Lots	16.7%	7
	Some	50%	21
	Little	19%	8
	None	14.3%	6
	Don't know	0%	0
View	Comment	31%	13
Total Respondents			42
(skipped this question)			1

2. IF YOU ANSWERED ANYTHING OTHER THAN "NONE" TO QUESTION ONE, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT INVOLVEMENT?

- Not particularly involved since I left MOE.
- Impact on process was marginal, but still present to a certain extent.
- Funding is difficult to obtain and notice thereof is given at the last minute. Not a good way to run a program IMO.
- It's great to see the province re-engaging in implementation projects throughout the province. Some changes to the next round would elevate program to 'strongly positive'.
- COA has enabled the development of effective partnerships which have enhanced our capacity to deliver public outreach on invasive species and to engage private landowners/groups in stewardship activities.

2. If you answered anything other than "none" to Question One, how do you feel about that involvement?			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly positive	28.6%	10
	Somewhat positive	42.9%	15
	Somewhat negative	14.3%	5
	Strongly negative	0%	0
	Don't know	11.4%	4
View	Comments	22.9%	8
Total Respondents			35
(skipped this question)			8

3. The Agreement is making a difference to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem?

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		24.2%	8
Mostly Agree		36.4%	12
Mostly Disagree		18.2%	6
Strongly Disagree		0%	0
Don't know		15.2%	5
Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)		57.6%	19
Total Respondents			33
(skipped this question)			10

3. COMMENTS...

- Funding has helped MNR and MOE do things they could not have without coa.
 - Still too much bureaucracy involved. I don't believe that the real issues are being addressed yet, although the targeted issues are important and relevant to the Great Lakes.
 - Progress is being made in some respects (e.g. return of endangered species) and in abatement of some toxic chemicals, whereas in other cases (e.g. non-point P pollution; invasive species) we have made little or no progress.
 - I am sure it is contributing, but what's more important at what cost. Are the returns satisfactory relative to cost?
- Again, a very good program. A couple of suggestions for the next round: – per the GLIC report, included conservation authorities in COA development, preferably as signatories to the agreement – develop a more transparent, objective process for grant awards i.e., there is currently no 'application' process. this has generally worked well for us at the essex region conservation authority because we are proactive and have good relations with MOE and MNR COA staff, however, some good local initiatives that meet CAO goals are not necessarily considered in the evaluation process – fund projects outside of AOCs to a greater extent – host tech transfer sessions to allow for dissemination of success and avoidance of failures. these could be themed e.g., research and monitoring, habitat restoration, etc.
 - Too much emphasis on AOC and not enough emphasis on LaMP implementation.
 - True cost sharing needs to be achieved 50% by the Federal Government and 50% from the Province. The Federal and Provincial commitment timetables need to be synchronized to be effective. Budgets for both levels of governments need guaranteed commitments to restoration workplans with tangible timetables that are protected from political whimsy. COA should be the instrument to achieve this.
 - Implementation is poor. NGOs compete with government for funds. Province merely cuts environmental programs and uses agreement funds to pay for what it was already doing – no net increase in environmental programs.
 - We have not seen monitoring reports to see if the Agreement is making a difference. We found the agreement to focus on chemical water quality parameters but not on ecological communities (i.e. AOCs were identified based on water quality parameters and to our knowledge did not include aquatic ecosystem health).
 - COA is making a difference, particularly on specific issues which previously had not been adequately addressed/funded. For example, prior to COA, there was minimal investment directed at aquatic invasive species. With funding from COA and leveraged support from partners, significant action has been achieved in preventing introductions via public outreach, development of risk assessment capacity and monitoring/ documenting invasions. The challenge is to maintain the momentum of COA initiatives, particularly in the face of funding reductions for implementation in the final year of the agreement and its subsequent renegotiation.
 - Strong support from the provincial and federal environmental agencies under this agreement has provided excellent technical and management expertise and financial support to achieve many environmental goals within AOC's.
 - The governments need to devote more staff and resources to Agreement implementation, and to do a better job making and reporting on progress to the IJC.

4. COMMENTS...

- The Office of Research Services at My Institute is unaware of the program.
- Greater emphasis on watershed health as a key to improving the health of the Great Lakes would be appropriate.
- CELA has spent considerable program time over decades in efforts to strengthen Great Lakes Protection both on the policy and programme levels as well as involvement in local RAPS and LAMPS. We have spent considerable time attempting to integrate Great Lakes protection into the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and into provincial law reform underway on source protection. We have advocated for more integration of human health issues into Great Lakes programmes. We have worked to provide the public with tools to understand the impacts of discharges to the Great Lakes through our PollutionWatch website. Recently, we co-authored a book “the Evolution of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement” published by the University of Michigan Press. It is our hope that this book will inform the upcoming review of the GLWQA. In the past our staff has been involved in advising the Canadian negotiating team for the 1987 review and were instrumental in the inclusion of virtual elimination and RAP provisions. We have worked with others for decades in coalition to achieve the goals of strengthening Great Lakes protections. We think the institutional arrangements in COA are in need of overhaul to ensure they are effectively keeping pace with Great Lakes water quality needs.
- We support the agreement but would like to see more integration between benthic and fish community as it relates to chemical water quality and water quantity issues.

4. I/my organization understand(s) and support(s) the goals, results expected and priorities for the current Agreement.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		27.3%	9
Mostly Agree		57.6%	19
Mostly Disagree		3%	1
Strongly Disagree		0%	0
Don't know		9.1%	3
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	27.3%	9
Total Respondents			33
(skipped this question)			10

5. The scope of the Agreement adequately addresses the key aquatic environmental issues in the basin?

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		12.1%	4
Mostly Agree		51.5%	17
Mostly Disagree		18.2%	6
Strongly Disagree		3%	1
Don't know		15.2%	5
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)		45.5% 15
Total Respondents			33
(skipped this question)			10

5. COMMENTS....







- Limited to RAPS, LaMPs and chemical controls. no strong results aimed at nonpoint source pollution, urbanization, climate change, invasive species, et.
- Industrial focus still too strong (municipal/recreational focus lacking.
- Too much effort on fighting old battles, not enough focus on emergent problems.
- But, too broad in scope for available resources in light of all the other goings on in GL basin, in my opinion.
- It is generally a broad and robust agreement.
- Not really familiar with the degree to which the agreement addresses the issues.
- Emerging issues are not adequately addressed (pahraceuticals, invasive species, climate change). Degradation of coastal terrestrial ecosystems need more inclusion as development pressures mount.
- There are a number of new challenges emerging in the basin that will need to be integrated into the GLWQA and future COA Agreements.
- From our review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, there seems to be a lack on integration between water quantity, water quality and the impacts these have on the aquatic ecosystem. We would like to see an assessment of linkages between the aquatic biological communities and the potential threats that are associated with water quantity and quality issues.
- Agreement addresses various environmental improvements that are necessary to improve aquatic systems.
- Needs to look at airborne and nonpoint sources, and to actualize an ecosystem approach.

6. COMMENTS...

- Helps with RAPs and LaMPs, but that is only one annex in the GLWQA, there are 16 other annexes that it does not address (acknowledge that it need not address the coast guard annexes).
- Funding to improve AOC remains a token amount of what is needed.
- As always integration in resource management is elusive. COA has been more effective in the RAPs than the LaMPs in my view... see comment above re. increased funding needed in non-AOCs. also, better linking COA priorities to local priorities is needed and this can be achieved through more meaningful cons auth involvement and tech transfer, in my view. i'm not sure that enough emphasis has been placed on linking COA to the GLWQA. in particular, annexes 3 (P control) and 13 (NPS) have not been properly addressed (except perhaps P loadings from STPs).
- Although there is movement forward on the AOCs, there is little progress on LaMP implementation.
- Lake Huron does not have a Lakewide Management Plan and is not currently effectively served by the "binational partnership" model. The LaMP model is too structured and consuming of resources, but a model that takes an ecosystem based approach to water quality and biodiversity issues would be welcome for Lake Huron.
- COA was far more effective in the past. It is no longer a strong agreement for reasons we already have articulated.
- While we think that the Agreement is a start, we disagree with the fact that AOC have been based on chemical water quality parameters and not on an integrated ecosystem basis. Areas that may not have the chemical water quality concerns that have been identified in Toronto and Hamilton, may have ecosystem concerns that would necessitate funding to restore ecosystem health but are not receiving assistance because they are not identified as an AOC. In addition, some of these areas may also be receiving impacts from identified AOCs but these effects have not been identified or addressed.
- We agree that COA provides an effective component of Ontario's commitments to the implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. We are particularly supportive of Ontario's approach which has focused on partnerships and "on the ground" activities. This approach has yielded direct benefits with respect to conservation and rehabilitation of fish and wildlife populations and their habitats etc.
- Canada has not made significant progress, so I assume COA needs to be focused and strengthened and better funded.

6. The Agreement is an effective component of Canada's and Ontario's efforts to implement the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and associated Remedial Action Plans and Lakewide Management Plans.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Strongly Agree	15.2%	5
	Mostly Agree	42.4%	14
	Mostly Disagree	27.3%	9
	Strongly Disagree	3%	1
	Don't know	12.1%	4
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	42.4%	14
Total Respondents			33
(skipped this question)			10

7. Government agencies involved in COA work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion with external partners to achieve the objectives of the Agreement.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		25%	8
Mostly Agree		28.1%	9
Mostly Disagree		28.1%	9
Strongly Disagree		9.4%	3
Don't know		9.4%	3
View Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)		59.4%	19
Total Respondents			32
(skipped this question)			11

7. COMMENTS....

- Projects that have begun in cooperation with University research partners have yielded very good results.
- Coordinated and integrated, yes. Cooperation is, however, another story (seemed we were working towards a predetermined end point).
- Some coordination is evident but mostly there are unilateral initiatives that lack over all coordination. COA is too bureaucratic.
- Good collaboration exists between federal and provincial scientists, professors and NGOs.
- Program was overshadowed by other multi-

jurisdictional programs such as GLBT, resulting in very low profile and hence questionable if it delivered generally all what it was meant to.

- See comment in #6 – cooperative, yes; coordinated, sort of; integrated, not yet. but the intent seems to be there. very encouraged by (my understanding that) the COA mgmt cttee recently endorsed the GLIC recommendations around broading the inclusion of local communities. to date COA has been quite top down and closed door – efforts to change this will result in better progress I think. also, renewable 5 year programs is essential.
- Our experience is that cooperation, coordination and integration are lacking, even between Federal and Provincial partners.
- To restore the AOCs successfully needs the involvement of all levels of government, especially regarding legacy problems. When those issues are restored then it is reasonable to expect the local levels of gov. to maintain the restoration in a sustainable fashion.
- There have been occassional exceptons,but for the most part, agencies retain a “top down” approach to environmental work. Most agencies work poorly at the local level and tend to have a paternalistic approach to dealing with issues at the local community level.
- Competition between NGOs and government for funding. Government has little interest in identifying problems – more interested in greenwashing.
- As a CA that has not been identified as an AOC, we have not received support to meet objectives of this Agreement, we hope that future initives will allow us to work collaboratively with all levels of government to protect and enhance the Basin’s ecosystem.
- We have observed the development of a number of beneficial partnerships between Ontario (MNR, MOE) and external partners to achieve the objectives of COA. However, we are less familiar with the existence of new partnerships or funding at the federal level with external partners to achieve COA objectives.
- Planning out initiaves and reviewing projects under the scope of various agency expertise is beneficial -Positive influence on the directionality and scientific scope of projects.

8. COMMENTS...

- Lack information, gloss over facts and ignore challenges. Need to be more transparent and honest.
- I have never received one of the reports and so am unable to comment.
- Reports are seldom seen or read by general public and stakeholders – too bureaucratic
- SOLEC reports are well done and informative. The review by all stakeholders before acceptance of scientific papers/ findings for inclusion in SOLEC has helped in that regard.
- Good reports, though there were some inaccuracies re. project intent and outcomes.
- Progress Report is well written and focuses on improvements but does not address gaps. As well, reports are not produced in a timely fashion.
- While they are getting better with using plain language, their accuracy has a limited shelf life. Components of the SOL, for instance, are often prepared by intern staff who move on. Source information becomes dated or difficult to track down once authors leave. I think they call this institutional memory-loss.
- Reports end up being spin documents for government programs, rather than providing meaningful information or tools for accountability. There is little to no publicity or dissemination of reports.
- A better network of information exchange is required to provide stakeholders with information in a timely matter to permit meaningful review and comment.
- The 2002-2003 biennial progress report for COA was satisfactory. However not having seen the 2004-2005 report make it difficult to completely answer this question... and also to fully report on this survey.
- Well organized, information provided is useful and very informative, graphics well done.

8. The various reports produced under the Agreement (Progress Reports, State of the Lakes, Citizen's Guide etc) are meaningful, reliable and accurate, timely and written using plain language.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		6.2%	2
Mostly Agree		46.9%	15
Mostly Disagree		28.1%	9
Strongly Disagree		3.1%	1
Don't know		15.6%	5
View	Comments - Please elaborate on your answer to the question (Identify Successes, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement)	50%	16
Total Respondents			32
(skipped this question)			11

9. What are the major challenges and opportunities for improving the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the Agreement?

[View](#) Total Respondents 31

(skipped this question) 12

9. COMMENTS...

- I could write a thesis on this.
- Addressing urbanization impacts Addressing the invasive species issue Increasing integrated programs with common objectives rather than ‘aligning separate fed/provincial initiatives’ Engaging a broader range of industry/business stakeholders than the traditional energy & chemical big company participants.
- Can improve ways to assess, identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas such as coastal wetlands in Georgian Bay and North Channel.
- As a major industrial stakeholder on the great lakes I see very little information exchange, support or participation opportunities. There is still very little in the way of monitoring of the basin either by utilizing existing monitoring programs in place or implementing new programs. There has been no attempt by government agencies to approach industry to directly ask what they are doing about protecting the basin beyond regulatory compliance, there appears to be no funding for local community groups to actively participate in protection of the basin, there is no incentive provided to go beyond regulatory compliance or put aside areas for protection.
- Identifying progress and its relationship to the Agreement (i.e. was the Agreement the cause of the progress?).
- Need targets, deadlines and milestones in the original agreement with annual reporting of progress against them. Allocation of funds upfront and annual reporting of distribution and results.
- Communication to the public about the program.
- Long-term commitment by all partners; coordination.
- We need much more money to effectively manage these problems. Management also needs to be far more adaptive than at present. Environment Canada needs to step up to the plate with regard to important issues like invasive species, which thus far they have not done. Funding of all partners, including the federal departments is needed. McGuinty’s government should be credited with an honest attempt to improve conditions in the basin.
- Challenges: Delivery; identifying more clearly, scientifically and efficiently the priorities, the organization needed, and the resources needed to implement actions and measure performance to completion. Opportunities: Focus; ability to focus valuable resources on short list of issues, the highest priority ones from health/environmental aspect that have a reasonable chance of mitigation, and after designing an action plan to resource it sufficiently to achieve delivery.
- To “lead” the discussion on a new GLWQA that is consistent with a new vision and the kind of direction that COA has been taking in a broad sense
- See comments in previous ‘comments’ sections. Only additional item would be better connecting with the feds’ priorities (I state this understanding that a great deal of collaboration has no doubt occurred but the details of which I am completely unfamiliar). This will be especially challenging given the shift occurring at EC. Nevertheless in our view there needs to be greater emphasis placed on watershed health as a mechanism to improving great lakes water quality – land uses are the dominant driver of in lake conditions in the lower great lakes. better local engagement is essential.
- I can’t think of any.

- The Agreement needs to broaden the focus to the basin as a whole and not just the AOCs. An integrated watershed planning approach is appropriate for more meaningful and manageable progress. The Agreement needs to be broadened to incorporate source water and other water resource issues. As the primary water resource management agencies in the Province, there needs to be more meaningful involvement of Conservation Authorities in the implementation of the Agreement.
- Elections Gaps between agreements. When excellent programs are on a roll and seeing the end in sight, then a sudden lack of funding, due to time lost between one COA to the next, causes severe impediments to finishing a project (Lack of continuity, burn-out, cynicism...).
- The challenge is to get out of decades old thinking of Great Lakes cleanup as focussing on toxic hot spots and truly beginning to take an ecosystem approach to protecting the Great Lakes. There is an opportunity to take a strategic direction with a plan for the Great Lakes, sub-plans for each lake based on regional priorities, and then implementing by taking a bottom-up approach where local communities are empowered to take action, and the federal-provincial roles are to facilitate through funding, research and administrative support.
- The agreement alone will not restore the Great Lakes or accomplish the goals of the GLWQA. The province of Ontario needs to restore funding to environmental programs that complement Great Lakes initiatives. The federal government needs to pair its investment in restoration with strict enforcement of the Fisheries Act and Migratory Birds regulations.
- Ensure stringent rules are applied to all to ensure that the integrity and intent of the Agreement is not lost by the neglect (or reduced) by previous agreements or current practices (i.e. Chicago's water taking practices with respect to the Great Lakes Annex Agreement). Ensure enforcement, support and assistance in implementing the objectives of the agreement - so that success can be attained. Implement integrated monitoring programs and provide access to data collected so that stakeholders can measure their actions and practice adaptive environmental management. These programs should include watershed monitoring programs and their impacts on the Great Lakes. Watersheds that are not part of the identified AOCs should be included in discussions regarding the ecosystem management of the Basin and should have the opportunity to receive funding and support to implement monitoring and land use managing practices (such as Low Impact Development strategies) that can improve the ecosystem health of the watershed and Basin.
- Agreements are wonderful things, But only people can give them legs. And only financing can drive the process. Without adequate people or financing the process dies and /or people become frustrated. Monitoring the effectiveness of where the monies go, and utilizing both money and people are the biggest challenges.
- One of the major challenges in improving the efficiency/effectiveness of the Agreement lies primarily with the process for implementation and planning and reporting. Although COA is a 5 year agreement..only three years of this agreement (2003, 2004 and 2005) are devoted to "on the ground" implementation. The loss of momentum and lack of continuity to programming and activities has a significant impact on capacity to achieve or maintain COA objectives.
- Having funding opportunities/commitments in place to monitor the success and effectiveness of programs that have been implemented over the years will be beneficial in gauging and maintaining the success of environmental efforts
- Make sure it is effective in actually implementing the objectives in the GLWQA!!! That is, in restoring and protecting our Great Lakes. Measure and report on ecosystem outcomes, not how much money was spent or programmatic issues.

10. Whom do you work for?			
		Response Percent	Response Total
	Municipality	3.1%	1
	First Nations	0%	0
	ENGO's/NGO's	37.5%	12
	Private Sector	18.8%	6
	Educational Institution	12.5%	4
View	Other (please specify)	31.2%	10
Total Respondents			32
(skipped this question)			11

Appendix C:

Interviews/Focus Group Questions

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND GROUP SESSIONS

Purpose of the Interviews

The Survey data was supplemented and verified by 14 personal interviews with key informants and opportunistic group sessions with various gatherings or meetings of participants that were already “booked” for some other purpose. The consultants asked these groups if they could be added to the agenda to discuss the “group’s” perceptions of COA.

Interview Guide

A 4-page interview guide was prepared and given to the interviewees at the beginning of each interview.

The interview Guide provided interviewees with:

- a brief summary of the findings of the electronic survey,
- asked them to react to the survey findings,
- proposed some emerging conclusions and
- prompted an open-ended discussion of where things should go for the next agreement

A copy of the interview Guide is included...

COA Review

Discussion Guide

V3

Robb Ogilvie, Managing Partner
Lysette Ogilvie, Partner

Associates & Affiliates

John Cary, Facilitator
Debbie Clouston, CE, Coordinator
Sue Cumming, Facilitator and Planner
Melanie Frances, Writer, Editor and ODP
Tara Hingzo, Graphic Design / Writer
Nelsa Hird, Environmental Planner
Fred Johnson, Environmental Consultant
Dr. Jim Maclean, Ecology Advisor
Michael Nuyes, Project Management
Mel Plewes, Environmental Consultant
Shirley Yasuda, Writer / Editor
Tony Usher, Land Use Planner
Bev Warner, Executive Assistant
Dave Watson, Facilitator
Karen Wolfe, Project Coordinator
Dr. Charlotte Young, Facilitator

500 Pefferlaw Road,
Pefferlaw, Ontario, L0E 1H0

Tel: 705-437-4271

Toll Free: 1-866-39-0000

Fax: 705-437-2546

On Star: 905-649-0645

E-mail: mobal@ils.net

robb.ogilvie@mobalizers.com

jimmactean@780@rogers.com

www.mobalizers.com



Purpose of the Review

The Parties to the Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem are committed to a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the Agreement during the fifth year. This commitment includes the requirements that the review be completed within six months, that the Parties consult with the public on the review, and that the results be publicly available 60 days after completion. The review must be completed by March 2007. The Management Committee is responsible for the review, as part of its responsibility for continuous improvement. One component of the comprehensive review is an evaluation of the Purpose of the Agreement and of the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative processes that the Management Committee has established to fulfill their responsibilities for implementation. The first step in this evaluation is to gather information and experiences about implementation since 2002 from the Parties, their partners in delivery, and Great Lakes Basin stakeholders.

Overview of the Study Design

The review has four components:

1. Survey of Internal and External Participants

A set of questions was designed to solicit information and opinions on the effectiveness and efficiency of COA from both a cross-section of staff from the Parties to the Agreement (internal survey) and selected participants from other levels of government, NGOs and academia that are involved in Great Lakes management (external survey). A survey software package was used to capture and analyze responses from 63 internal and 42 external participants during December and January.

2. Analysis of Other Agreements and Mechanisms

Other international and federal/provincial agreements, as well as evaluations and audits of related programs by Auditors and Environmental Commissioners at both levels on government, are being examined with a view to assessing best management practices. These BMPs will provide a further basis for evaluating the current COA and for offering advice to improve the next COA.

3. Interviews and Focus Groups

Selected participants in COA and Great Lakes management will be invited to have input into the review through either an interview or a focus group. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss both the initial findings by the consultants from the survey and the implications for the next COA.

4. Final Report

A final report will be prepared for Management Committee by March 2006 to present the results of the surveys, interviews and focus groups and recommend changes for the next COA.

Purpose of the Focus Groups & Interviews

1. To seek your input on "first observations", which are the consultants' initial synthesis of responses to the survey questions about the current Agreement:

- do you agree with, disagree with, or want to modify the observations?

2. To discuss "provisional conclusions", which are the consultants' initial synthesis of suggestions from the survey about what changes to COA should be recommended to the Management Committee.

- do you agree with, disagree with, or want to modify the conclusions?

- have we missed an important change that you want?

- what are the most important conclusions?

3. To capture any other input that you wish to provide or drill into our heads... cautions, hopes, fears, advice.



COA Review

First Observations	Responses, Comments, Additions
<p>1. Overall assessment of current COA is strongly positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a good response to the surveys; - 63 (52%) responses to internal survey and 42 (47%) to external - lots of comments/ suggestions - 90.4% of internal responses and 59.4% of external responses indicate that COA is making a difference to restoring, protecting and conserving the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. - 70.6 % of external responses indicate that their involvement with COA has been positive. - specific comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "an improvement over previous COA's"; "an excellent instrument for much-needed pooling of limited resources"; "usefully under-funded"; "challenges in capital investment required to delist AOC's"; "too much bureaucracy". 	
<p>2. Excellent support for 2002 Agreement as written</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 69.4% of internal and 84.3% of external responses indicate that the goals, results expected and priorities are understood and shared throughout their organization - 83.9% of internal and 62.5% of external responses indicate that the scope of the Agreement adequately addresses the key aquatic environmental issues in the Basin. - 79% of internal responses indicate that the Annexes articulate the commitments that the Parties will deliver - 80.6% of internal responses indicate that the Agreement adequately identifies actions that support implementation of CLWQA and associated RAPS and I-AMPS. - 63% of internal responses agree that Annexes identify reasonable and measurable outcomes. - specific comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Broad and robust agreement"; "too broad for ...available resources"; "goals, results and commitments often have no apparent link"; "result statements... broad and ... Performance measurement is difficult"; "too little focus on emerging problems" 	
<p>3. Parties have adhered to Principles of Agreement during Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong indication (69-94%) from internal responses that Parties have adhered to Principle set out in Agreement, with possible exception of precautionary principle (47%) 	
<p>4. Implementation of the Agreement is not seen as having been effective and efficient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 45% of internal responses agree that current management structure is effective and efficient - 36.6% of internal responses agree that current administrative structure is efficient and effective - 30.5% of internal responses agree that Management Committee has processes in place to identify, assess and respond to emerging issues and concerns - 53.4% of internal responses agree that staff of the Parties have the authority and tools that they need to make decisions and take action - 46.7% of the internal responses indicate satisfaction with the decision-making processes in COA - specific comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "far too much process and far too little action"; "merging of secretariats a step forward"; "late evidence of management decision-making"; "too complex and layered" 	



COA Review

<p>5. The partnership structure of the current Agreement is broadly supported and could be expanded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80% of internal responses and 51.6% of external agree that Parties work together in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion - 66.6% of internal responses indicate that other partners and non-government organizations are involved and making a difference in implementation - specific comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "A great deal of cooperative action"; "partnership participation is critical to success of programs"; "need to bring COAs on side"; "limited involvement by NGOs"; "competition between NGOs and government for funding" 	
<p>6. Leadership emerges as an issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limited agreement that management structure is effective and efficient and that Management Committee has processes in place to manage emerging issues - specific responses included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "MC too high level, too poorly informed and too concerned to avoid only commitments"; "MC does not make significant decisions/direction that impact implementation"; "little direction from MC or AIC"; "the agreement needs leadership to solve the piecemeal approach and we are not getting it"; "MC should be focused more on next Agreement than on current one"; "I have not seen timely or strategic decisions from MC" 	
<p>7. Mixed reviews for Agreement reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 61.7% of internal responses and 51.7% of external agree that reports are meaningful, reliable and accurate, timely and written using plain language - specific comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "lack info, gloss over facts and ignore challenges"; "well written...but does not address gaps"; "not produced in timely fashion"; "spin documents" 	
<p>8. Other Observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have we missed anything? Did you expect to see something here that is missing? 	
<p>Provisional Conclusions</p> <p>Both internal and external participants were asked what the major challenges and opportunities for improving efficiency and effectiveness were, and additional ideas were included in the comments on other questions. A first cut at a synthesis of these suggestions is the focus for this section of the Guide.</p>	<p>Responses, Comments, Additions</p>
<p>1. Broaden scope of Agreement to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - invasive species - water quantity - land use/urbanization - climate change 	
<p>2. Broaden Parties to Agreement to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - other Federal (Infrastructure Canada) and provincial (Health, Public Infrastructure Renewal) agencies - other governments (municipal, aboriginal) - NGOs - academia 	<p>continued on next page</p>



Appendix D:

COA Review Participants

1. COA REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tony Colavecchia, *Environment Canada*
Ed Paleczny, *Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources*
Rick Czepita, *Environment Canada*

2. COA REVIEW FOCUS GROUPS

COA Review – Ministry of Natural Resources Meeting, January 24, 2006

ATTENDEES:

Alec Denys	David McLeish
Rich Drouin	Ed Paleczny, <i>COA Review Committee</i>
Barb Mabee	Bev Ritchie
Rob MacGregor	Tracy Smith
Jim MacLean, <i>Facilitator for COA Review discussion</i>	Dawn Walsh

COA Review – Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Implementer’s Workshop January 26, 2006, Guelph

ATTENDEES:

Environment Canada (EC)	John Marsden
Janette Anderson	Jiri Marselak
Bill Booty	Greg Mayne
Allan Crowe	Dan McDonnell
Tom Edge	Jacqui Milne
Sandra George	Carolyn O’Neill
Rimi Kalinauskas	Peter Seto
Kay Kim	Jenn Vincent
Scott MacKay	

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)

Doug Aspinall	Bob Steiss
Peter Roberts	Stewart Sweeney
Len Senyshyn	

Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE)

Duncan Boyd	Patrick Morash
Ted Briggs	Ian Parrish
Conrad deBarro	Mary Ellen Scanlon s
Todd Howell	Aaron Todd

Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)

Dave Anderson	Pat Furlong
Rich Drouin	Ed Paleczny, COA Review Committee

Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

Mohi Munawar

Conservation Authorities (CAs):

Matthew Child, *Essex Region CA*
Melanie Coulter, *Essex Region CA*
John Hall, *Hamilton Region CA*
Kristen O'Connor, *Hamilton Region CA*
Jocelyn Baker, *Niagara Peninsula CA*
Valerie Cromie, *Niagara Peninsula CA*
Barry Jones, *Quinte CA*
Joyce Olson, *Quinte CA*
Katherine Beehler, *Raisin Region CA*
Chris Critoph, *Raisin Region CA*
Adele Freeman, *Toronto and Region CA*
Kelly Montgomery, *Toronto and Region CA*
Craig Merkely, *Upper Thames River CA*

Other

Ron Fleming,
Ridgetown College

Doug Joy,
University of Guelph

Jim MacLean,
Facilitator

Katherine Rentsch,
University of Guelph

Pam Scharfe,
Huron County Health Unit

COA Provincial Directors Meeting, January 31, 2006ATTENDEES:

Audrey Bennet, *Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing (MAH)*

Alec Denys, *MNR*

Conrad deBarros, *MOE*

Scott Duff, *OMAFRA*

Fred Fleischer, *MOE*

Charles Lalonde, *OMAFRA*

Jim MacLean, *Facilitator*

Ed Paleczny, *COA
Review Committee*

Richard Raeburn Gibson, *MOE*

Bev Ritchie, *MNR*

Henri Selles, *MOE*

John Vidan, *MOE*

COA Annex Implementation Committee Meeting, February 14, 2006ATTENDEES:

Janette Anderson, *EC*

Judi Barnes, *MOE*

Tony Colavecchia,
COA Review Committee

Rick Czepita,
COA Review Committee

Alec Denys, *MNR*

Conrad deBarros, *MOE*

Scott Duff, *OMAFRA*

Fred Fleischer, *MOE*

Sandra George, *EC*

Mike Goffin, *EC*

Rob Hyde, *EC*

Allison Kennedy, *EC*

Maxine Kingston, *Agriculture
and Agri-Food Canada*

Jim MacLean, *Facilitator*

Ed Paleczny,
COA Review Committee

Richard Raeburn-Gibson, *MOE*

Julie Schroeder, *MOE*

3. INTERVIEWS

Federal

Maxine Kingston

Simon Llewellyn

John Mills

Peter Townsend

Provincial

Peter Wallace

Michael Williams

Kevin Wilson

External Stakeholders

Chris Goddard

Gail Kranzberg

Don Pearson

Peter Victor

Note: Those who received the Internal or External Survey were given the option of participating anonymously. Therefore, it is not possible to provide a complete list of survey participants.

Appendix E:

Selected Research on Governance

DEFINITIONS

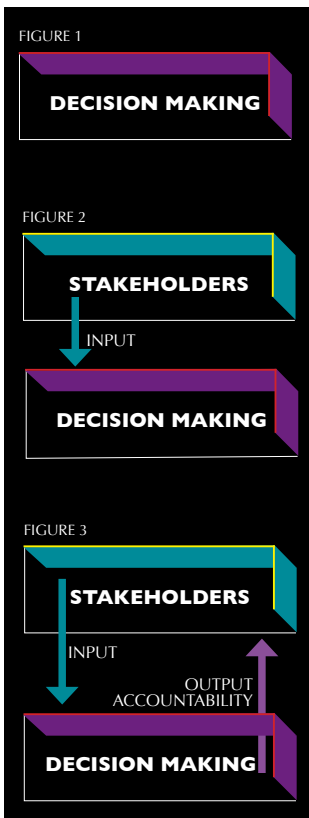
Although the term governance is often used synonymously with the term government it tends rather to be used to describe the processes and systems by which a government or governor operates. It is often used by corporate organisations to describe the manner in which a corporation is directed, and the applicable regulatory regime under which it operates. The eight functions of governance are adapted from Building on Strength, the report of the Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector, 1999.

“The need for governance exists anytime a group of people come together to accomplish an end. Most agree that the central component of governance is decision-making. It is the process through which this group of people make decisions that direct their collective efforts.”

If the group is too large to efficiently make all necessary decisions, it creates an entity to facilitate the process. Group members delegate a large portion of the decision-making responsibility to this entity. In voluntary sector organizations this entity is the board of directors. One simple definition of governance is “the art of steering societies and organizations.” Governance is about the more strategic aspects of steering, making the larger decisions about both direction and roles.

Some observers criticize this definition as being too simple. Steering suggests that governance is a straightforward process, akin to a steersman in a boat. These critics assert that governance is neither simple nor neat — by nature it may be messy, tentative, unpredictable and fluid. Governance is complicated by the fact that it involves multiple actors, not a single helmsman.

Decision-makers are then accountable to those same stakeholders for the organization’s output and the process of producing it.



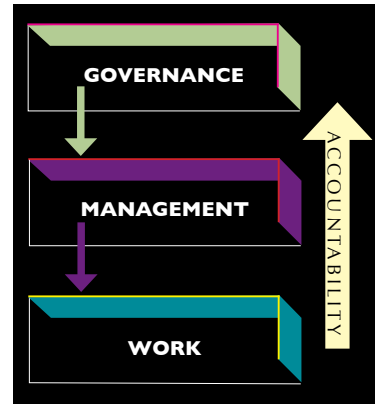
There are three distinct roles that are necessary in order for an organization to fulfill its mission:

WORK – Performing the tasks required to fulfill the mission

GOVERNANCE – As defined above: the interface with stakeholders, the source of strategic decisions that shape the organization and its work, and ultimate accountability for the work and actions of the organization

MANAGEMENT – The link between governance and work. The organization of tasks, people, relationships and technology to get the job done

In theory the divisions between these roles are clear. However, in practice the divisions become blurred, disappear altogether or, more dangerously, become confused. In the non-profit sector, the primary charge of boards is the governance role but their responsibilities might often cross over into the management and work roles of the organization. Senior management is almost always heavily involved in the governance role. The real danger is not the mixing of these roles, but unclear definition of responsibilities and lost lines of accountability.



THE 8 FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Effective board stewardship involves eight key tasks:

1. Steering toward the mission and guiding strategic planning;
 2. Being transparent, including communicating to members, stakeholders and the public;
 3. Developing appropriate structures;
 4. Ensuring the board understands its role;
 5. Maintaining fiscal responsibility;
 6. Ensuring that an effective management team is in place and overseeing its activities;
 7. Implementing assessment and control systems; and
 8. Planning for the succession of the board..
-

COMPARISON OF COA TO OTHER MULTI-PARTY ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Ontario Forest Accord Advisory Board (OFFAB)

Overview

The Ontario Forest Accord, a landmark in forest policy, was negotiated between the forest industry, environmentalists and the Ontario government. It was signed in March 1999 by the leaders of the conservation community, (40 agencies called the Partnership for Public Lands (PPL)), the forest industry, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). The Accord, through its 31 specific commitments, formed the basis on which the conservation community, the forest industry and the Ontario government (through OMNR) would build a new, more constructive relationship in the future.

The task of guiding the collaborative implementation of Ontario Forest Accord was given to a tripartite body called the Ontario Forest Accord Advisory Board. The OFFAB reported to the Minister of Natural Resources. It was designed such that all members were responsible for consultation with their constituents, and members were empowered to make decisions and were able commit funds and staff directly from their organizations to support their decisions. The secretariat function was to support the Board, give background information and advice and carry out any instructions of the Board.

The Living Legacy Trust (LLT)

The Living Legacy Trust was established in 1999 by the Ontario government as part of Ontario's Living legacy. Its purpose was to invest \$30 million for the purpose of mitigating impacts resulting from the implementation of Ontario's Living Legacy as well as providing better information for sustainable resource management. The LLT supported collaborative science projects and science transfer, with significant grants made through partnerships with academia, industry and government. LLT also funded 296 years of forest employment opportunities, and hosted major biodiversity and forest science workshops. The LLT was able to leverage \$50 million of expenditures in addition to its \$30 million budget.

LLT had an 11 member Board of Directors which included representatives of the Ontario Forest Industry association, the Ontario Lumber Manufacturers Association, Ontario nature, world Wildlife Fund, the association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario MNR, Lakehead University, and four members at large.

OLL staffing included an Executive Director and three other staff members. The executive Director's responsibilities were defined as:

- Lead the Trust in the development of strategic and business plans to support effective funding decisions and distribution.
- Lead and stimulate marketing opportunities and partnerships between the Trust and its stakeholders.
- Represents the Trust at meetings and public forums.
- Provide policy, management and financial advice to the Board regarding the Trust's program, resource management and fiscal priorities including strategic direction, monthly Board meeting agenda, community outreach activities, government policy and consultations with stakeholders.
- Leadership for the research and analysis of current, emerging and anticipated policy issues related to the interests of the Trust.
- Initiate the identification of priority issues for research, natural resource management and other information to support funding decisions.
- Report on project and program results (internally and externally).

Consultants were used as required to assist LLT staff and the LLT Board in program design, priority establishment, project/program audit and operational review.

The Agricultural Policy Framework (APF)

In late 2003, Canada's Federal and Provincial governments began implementing a new structure called the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF). The underlying principle of the APF is to provide a much broader and more integrated, long-term approach to agricultural policy, one that focuses on the sector's ability to increase its profitability.

The APF's beginnings lie in the June 2001 annual meeting of Canada's Federal, Provincial, and Territorial agricultural ministers. The ministers agreed in principle on an action plan with five elements:

- (1) Business risk management,
- (2) Food safety and food quality,
- (3) Science and innovation,
- (4) Environment, and
- (5) Renewal.

As well, the framework seeks to build international markets for Canadian agricultural and food products by "branding Canada" as the world leader in food safety, innovation and environmentally responsible production.

The ministers formalized the plan by signing the Agricultural Policy Framework Agreement in 2002. By the end of 2003, all of Canada's Provinces had signed agreements with the Federal Government to implement the APF. The implementation agreements govern the delivery of new programming under the APF's five elements, including the nature of each program, delivery mechanisms, and which level of government will administer them. In addition, the agreements list program costs and formalize such things as the management structures needed to oversee particular programs.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF)

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation was established in March 2002 to help preserve, protect and restore the environmental integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine. The Foundation is a registered corporation with its own charter and an initial grant of \$15 million from the province of Ontario.

The ORMF was established following wide public consultation by the Ontario government on the future of the moraine and related complex land issues. The outcome of the consultation was a package of strategies, including legislation, regulation and the creation of the ORMF. The Oak Ridges Moraine Protection Act was passed in May 2001.

ORMF staffing includes an Executive Director a program specialist and support staff. The Executive Director's responsibilities include:

- Provision of leadership for the Foundation and support for the volunteer Board of Directors.
- Set-up and administration of the Foundation.
- Development and implementation of policies and programs.
- Management of a small staff and contract support.
- Development of partnerships and additional funding.
- Representing the Foundation to partners, the media and the general public.

Consultants are used as required to assist ORMF staff and the ORMF Board in program design/development and public consultation.

The following Table 2 provides a comparison of these models.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN AND GOVERNANCE
FEATURES OF OFFAB, LLT, APF, AND ORMF.

	Ontario Forest Accord Advisory Board (OFFAB)	The Living legacy Trust (LLT)	Agricultural Policy Framework (APF)	Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF)
MANDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To guide collaborative implementation of 31 specific commitments of the Ontario Forest Accord in Ontario's Living Legacy (OLL). •Commitments included establishing parks and protected areas while considering the needs of Ontario's forest industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To invest \$30 million for the purpose of mitigating impacts resulting from the implementation of Ontario's Living Legacy as well as providing better information for sustainable resource management. 	<p>APF Goal: "For Canada to be the world leader in food safety, innovation and environmentally-responsible production."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Separate implementation agreements exist between the Federal government and each provincial /territorial government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To to help preserve, protect and restore the environmental integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine.
MEMBERSHIP	<p>OFFAB had a nine member Board from the executive level of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Forest Industry •Partnership for Public Lands •Ontario OMNR. 	<p>LLT had an eleven member Board with representatives of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ontario Forest Industry Association •Ontario Lumber Manufactures Association, •Ontario Nature, •World Wildlife Fund, •Association of Municipalities of Ontario, •Ontario MNR, •Lakehead University, •Four members at large. 	<p>Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments.</p>	<p>ORMF has a nine person Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Four persons nominated by the Ontario Ministry of MAH. •One person nominated by the Crown in right of Canada. •Two persons from the environmental community. •One municipal nominee. •One Conservation Authority nominee.
STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nine member Board. •Two person (part time) secretariat. •No standing Committees. •Short term task teams created as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Eleven member Board with officers. •Executive Committee. •Executive Director and 4 staff. •Consultants used for some specific tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A Management Committee (MC) composed of a Federal and the Provincial delegate oversees all programs and activities under the Agreement. •The MC may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make adjustments to the contributions by Canada or the Province and related activities. - confirm or vary annual budgets. - evaluate whether the estimated costs are in conformity with the actual costs. - allocate carried forward funds. - review exceptions with respect to programs and activities. - may vary Risk Management Program cost-sharing arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nine member Board with officers. •Executive Director and 2 staff. •Consultants used for some specific tasks.

	Ontario Forest Accord Advisory Board (OFFAB)	The Living legacy Trust (LLT)	Agricultural Policy Framework (APF)	Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF)
FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainly a policy Board, with operational funding from OMNR, forest industry, and the environmental community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$30 million one time grant from the Ontario government. 	<p>\$1.7 billion by Canada and Ontario over 5 years.</p> <p>Implementation Agreements describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Federal/Provincial programs, contributions, and activities delivery responsibilities program funding costs and allocations. vaccountability processes. reporting mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$15 million one time grant from the Ontario government.
TERM	Three years	Five years	Five years (2003 to 2008)	No defined Term
REPORTING RELATIONSHIP	OFFAB reported to the Minister of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed by the Ontario government. The LLT was an independent entity governed by a Terms of Reference and a Charter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Management Committee reports to the federal and provincial Agriculture Ministers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed by the Ontario government. ORMF is a registered corporation with its own Charter.
MEETING FREQUENCY	Six weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As called by the Chair; initially bi-monthly, then normally approximately 6 times per year. 	The Management Committee meets at least once a year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As called by the Chair; initially monthly normally meets approximately 6 times per year.
COORDINATION AND LOGISTICS	OFFAB secretariat (provided by OMNR).	Executive Director and staff.		Executive Director and staff.
STRATEGIC SUPPORT	OFFAB secretariat.	Executive Director and staff.		Executive Director and staff.
STRATEGIES AND PLANS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OFFAB developed specific strategies regarding many of the 31 specific Ontario Forest Accord commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board refined the original government mandate and determined the LLT vision, goals, objectives, strategies, and priority setting. 	<p>Each of the five elements has detailed action and implementation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Business risk management, Food safety and food quality, Science and innovation, Environment, and Renewal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board established a vision and core purpose. Based on wide consultation with stakeholders along the Moraine, the Board established its, strategic direction, program strategies and priorities. The Board has developed strategic plans for specified program areas (e.g. Oak Ridges Trail).

	Ontario Forest Accord Advisory Board (OFFAB)	The Living legacy Trust (LLT)	Agricultural Policy Framework (APF)	Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF)
PROGRESS UPDATES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim and Final Reports were produced by the OFFAB secretariat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports were prepared and distributed to the public by the Executive Director and staff. • Annual open houses were used to disseminate results. • Results, including scientific reports were reported on the LLT website. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports were prepared and distributed to the public by the Executive Director and staff. • Annual open houses were used to disseminate results. • Results, including scientific reports were reported on the ORMF website.
SUBCOMMITTEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for several Task teams was decided by the OFFAB. • Funds and staff were committed directly by OFFAB members. • Coordination needs were met by OFFAB secretariat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committees were established by the Board as required, and coordinated by the Executive Director. • Consultants were used to help with program design, priority establishment, project/ program audit and operational review. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established by the Board as required, and coordinated by the Executive Director. • Consultants are used as required to assist in program design/ development and public consultation.
RESULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action taken on most of the 31 commitments. • A new relationship was established between the environmental community, forest industry and government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$30 million was spent as required. • The LLT was able to leverage \$50 million of additional expenditures. • Operational reviews were conducted. • All projects reported on to the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program is ongoing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ORMF program, as established by its vision, strategic direction, program strategies and priorities is ongoing.