



DRAFT CANADA-NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR AGREEMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT COOPERATION HIGHLIGHTS

In 1998, the Canadian Council of the Ministers of the Environment signed a Canada-wide accord on environmental harmonization and a supporting sub-agreement related to environmental assessment. This sub-agreement, which is implemented through federal-provincial bilateral agreements, commits parties to make every effort to work through a single cooperative environmental assessment process when more than one jurisdiction is involved in a project.

This draft *Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Agreement on Environmental Assessment Cooperation* outlines broad principles and practices of cooperation the governments of Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador hope to achieve. The agreement establishes a process to deliver high quality environmental assessments while avoiding overlap and duplication of effort. Once approved, this agreement will apply when an environmental assessment of a proposed project is required under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and Newfoundland and Labrador's *Environmental Protection Act, Part X*.

Some Highlights of the Draft Agreement

- Forms the basis for continued effective and efficient cooperation where federal and provincial environmental assessment legislation applies to the same project.
- Commits to early consultation with proponents on the potential for a cooperative environmental assessment.
- Preserves each government's authority and legislative requirements.
- Provides for effective consultation between parties to determine their environmental assessment responsibilities.
- Provides guidelines to determine a "lead party" responsible for administration of each cooperative environmental assessment.
- Sets out the principles for carrying out a cooperative environmental assessment and describes the roles and responsibilities of the parties.
- Provides for the development of work plans to make the assessment process more timely and efficient.
- Describes procedures for the establishment of joint review panels in the context of a cooperative environmental assessment.
- Establishes a single contact in each jurisdiction to coordinate consultation, to resolve process and content issues, and to ensure parties meet established timelines.

- Allows each party to use information generated by a joint assessment to make their own decisions about the process and to coordinate the timing of announcements related to the proposed project.
- Provides for an ongoing review of the bilateral agreement's effectiveness, and a thorough evaluation within five years.