



NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

Sustainability Statement

DECEMBER 2023



The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) has been entrusted with implementing Canada's plan for the safe, long-term management of its used nuclear fuel. This plan, known as Adaptive Phased Management (APM), includes managing not only the used fuel already produced, but also used nuclear fuel from the innovations of tomorrow. We have also been asked by the Government of Canada to implement the Integrated Strategy for Radioactive Waste pertaining to intermediate-level and non-fuel high-level waste. Our mandate is vital to supporting international sustainable development goals as well as Canada's sustainable development agenda by closing the nuclear fuel cycle. A significant milestone is now on the horizon as we expect to select the site for implementing Canada's plan in 2024.

Our commitment

Sustainability has been a thread through the NWMO's identity since its inception, and is supported by the values of safety, integrity, excellence, collaboration, accountability and transparency that guide our decisions and actions. This *Sustainability Statement* supports visioning and provides the basis upon which short- and longer-term sustainability priorities and goals for the NWMO can be established. We know that our actions, big and small, influence the future and we are committed to implementing sustainability principles and practices in all we do. We have an important role to play in supporting ecological and social well-being.

The NWMO emphasizes that Indigenous and local knowledge are intrinsic to our sustainability journey. Through ongoing dialogue with Indigenous communities and organizations, and advice received from the Council of Elders and Youth, the Advisory Council and the Environmental Review Group, Indigenous Knowledge perspectives and teachings have been heard and inform corporate frameworks and policies. We have also received guidance from and are grateful to continue dialogue with local knowledge holders, including Conservation Authorities, the agricultural sector, hunters, trappers, anglers and those with intimate knowledge of the lands and waters on which we work. We are committed to continuing to make a meaningful contribution to sustainability in alignment with the NWMO's *Indigenous Knowledge Policy*, *Reconciliation Policy*, *Environmental Responsibility Statement* and *Ethical and Social Framework*.

Guiding principles

We will continue to make space for protocols associated with Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous peoples' concepts of sustainability. Teachings shared with us by Elders on the One Dish One Spoon treaty resonate with the NWMO, and we are committed to working collaboratively with partners to ensure we leave a positive legacy for future generations. The principles that will guide us as we transition from primarily planning the project to its implementation are as follows:

- » Understand that our work affects the environment around us, and act with respect and care for the local, regional and global natural environment;
- » Demonstrate safety and stewardship, and transparently acknowledge uncertainty and the potential risk that may be passed on to future generations;
- » Apply Indigenous perspectives on Reconciliation and the values of respect, responsibility and reciprocity in our relationships with the lands and waters on which we work, and recognize that living a good life is not solely a matter of economic growth;
- » Accommodate nuanced, complex and local values in seeking solutions that draw on western science and Indigenous Knowledge;
- » Promote evidence-based sustainability actions that are aligned with community aspirations to create opportunities that enhance social and economic well-being in balance with nature;
- » Respect the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) consistent with evolving federal guidance on implementation; and
- » Strive for a culture of sustainability, which requires effective governance along with effort, maintenance and support throughout departments and organizational levels, and from our contractors and suppliers.

Sustainability will be approached as evergreen for the organization and will evolve over time as the NWMO moves through regulatory decision-making and begins to construct and eventually operate facilities needed to achieve our mandate. Our immediate attention is focused on fully characterizing our direct, indirect and supply chain impacts and dependencies associated with construction activities, and then determining what the NWMO needs to do to play our part in enhancing the resilience of the area selected for Canada's plan. Much work lies ahead.

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