Finding Your Voice: Environmental Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

APM-REP-00615-0003-R000 December 2009

Native Women's Association Canada

nwmo
NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION
SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

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Nuclear Waste Management Organization

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) was established in 2002 by Ontario Power Generation Inc., Hydro-Québec and New Brunswick Power Corporation in accordance with the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* (*NFWA*) to assume responsibility for the long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.

NWMO's first mandate was to study options for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. On June 14, 2007, the Government of Canada selected the NWMO's recommendation for Adaptive Phased Management (APM). The NWMO now has the mandate to implement the Government's decision.

Technically, Adaptive Phased Management (APM) has as its end-point the isolation and containment of used nuclear fuel in a deep repository constructed in a suitable rock formation. Collaboration, continuous learning and adaptability will underpin our implementation of the plan which will unfold over many decades, subject to extensive oversight and regulatory approvals.

NWMO Dialogue Reports

The work of the NWMO is premised on the understanding that citizens have the right to know about and participate in discussions and decisions that affect their quality of life, including the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. Citizens bring special insight and expertise which result in better decisions. Decisions about safety and risk are properly societal decisions and for this reason the priorities and concerns of a broad diversity of citizens, particularly those most affected, need to be taken into account throughout the process. A critical component of APM is the inclusive and collaborative process of dialogue and decision-making through the phases of implementation.

Disclaimer:

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Environmental Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY *Inspiring Minds*

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NWAC Mandate

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies.

NWAC is an aggregate of Native women's organizations from across Canada and was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1974.

Much like a "Grandmother's Lodge", we as aunties, mothers, sisters, brothers and relatives collectively recognize, respect, promote, defend and enhance our Native ancestral laws, spiritual beliefs, language and traditions given to us by the Creator.

Acknowledgements

Published with the guidance and support from:

- Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)
- Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO)
- Dalhousie University Master of Resource and Environmental Management Students

This *Finding Your Voice: Environmental Toolkit* is intended to help Aboriginal women engage their communities in discussions about environmental issues and take the lead in making informed decisions.

Thank you to everyone who contributed directly or indirectly to this project!

Disclaimer

This Toolkit is intended to guide education on environmental issues for Aboriginal communities. It also provides suggestions on how to obtain more information on an issue and to direct individuals, as well as communities, to professional sources for clarity and support regarding environmental issues. The information presented here is not intended to influence decision making in anyway, nor does it reflect the opinions or recommendations of the authors regarding specific environmental issues. The authors emphasize that for full effectiveness this document is meant to be used in its entirety, and not be broken into separate sections.

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Introduction to the Toolkit

Welcome

Welcome to *Finding Your Voice, Environmental Toolkit for Aboriginal Women*, developed in conjunction with the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). This Toolkit was designed to empower, assist, and engage Aboriginal women when dealing with environmental issues affecting their communities.

Background

The groundwork for this *Environmental Toolkit for Aboriginal Women* resulted from an NWAC Environmental Roundtable meeting in July 2008. Graduate students in the Master's of Resource and Environmental Management (MREM) Program at Dalhousie University volunteered to produce this Toolkit. Throughout the creation of this Toolkit, guidance was provided by NWAC members and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO).

The Toolkit is meant to provide relevant information and provide Aboriginal women with the tools they may need to ensure their issues are being addressed and their perspectives are being heard when looking to effectively participate in any environmental decision-making process.

The goals of this Toolkit are to:

- Provide Aboriginal women with information on how to proactively get involved in an environmental issue;
- Provide Aboriginal women with skills on how to research information about their environmental concerns;
- Bring Aboriginal women together to help promote sustainable development in their communities;
- Focus attention on the various processes, procedures, and important decisions that accompany environmental projects;
- Offer suggestions on how to bring Aboriginal women together to help create an environmental vision for their communities.

Scope of the Toolkit

The information found in this Toolkit is broken down into sections. Each section contains valuable information to help you deal with a wide variety of environmental issues.

Structure of the Toolkit

- Section 1: Introduction to the Toolkit
- Section 2: Getting Started
- Section 3: Being Proactive
- Section 4: Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- Section 5: When to ask for help? How to ask for help?
- Section 6: Environmental Assessment Basics

Each section can be used independently of the other sections. The Toolkit is meant to guide the user towards asking the right questions, it is not intended to answer questions.

Additional resources are recommended within each section and also in the Appendix of this Toolkit.

Table of Contents

A table of contents is provided to allow the user to find topics quickly.

Glossary and Acronyms *(in brochure)*

A glossary contains definitions for terms used in this Toolkit.

Throughout this Toolkit numerous acronyms will be used as short forms of the word. For example, Native Women's Association of Canada will be shown as NWAC. The first time the word appears it will be written out in full, after the first appearance of the word the acronym will be used.

Additional Resources

At the end of each section additional resources are recommended for use in your environmental discussions. In most cases, the guide will direct you to relevant websites and research documents.

Handouts

At the end of each section (if relevant) a one-page handout is found. The handouts provide valuable information covered in each section.

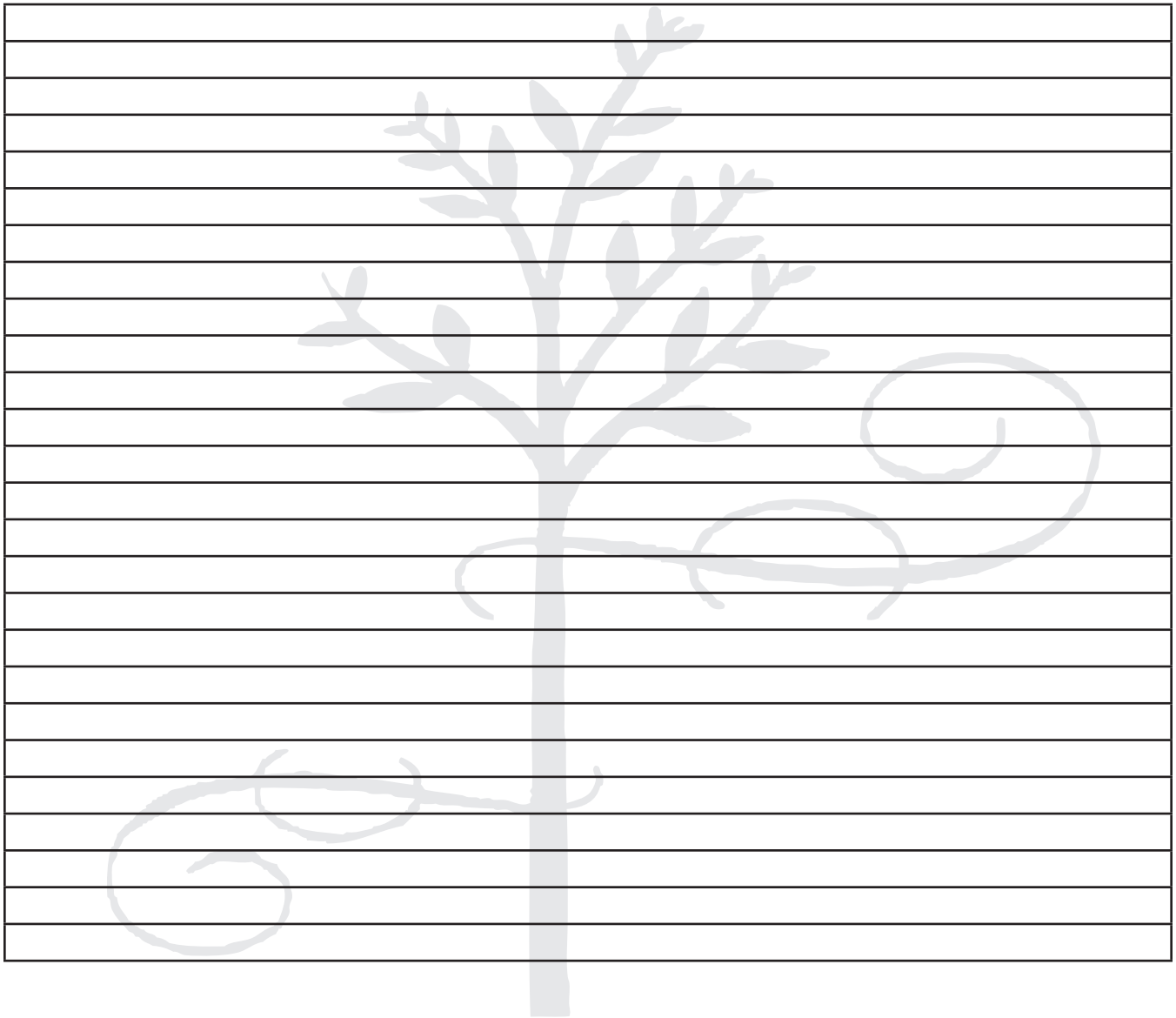
Checklists

Additionally, at the end of some sections checklist(s) can be found. The checklist(s) provide key information, questions, and important aspects to consider when you are addressing that specific topic. The checklists are meant to be used as a general guide and may be used for variety of environmental issues. Checklists are meant to be generic and may not be applicable to every environmental issue.

Notes

To encourage you to take notes blank pages are inserted throughout the document.

Notes



Getting Started

Cultural Context: The History of Aboriginal Women in Canada

◆ Early History

Aboriginal women have a long and proud history. While differences existed from nation to nation and village to village, women had a strong voice in their communities, which was honoured and respected. Women held important roles in their communities such as caretakers, leaders (spiritual and civil), as well as nurturers; in many ways they were the lifeblood of their people.

The First Europeans who came to this land recognized the power that women held in their communities and often sought to undermine it in order to convert and conquer Canada's First Peoples. Among many nations it was the women in the community that spoke the loudest against the Europeans and their attempt at colonization. So a number of false images of Aboriginal women were created by the Europeans, which shaped colonialist assimilation policy and was implemented in the residential school system and the *Indian Act.*

◆ Residential Schools and the *Indian Act*

Figure 1: Female students at Shingwauk Residential School

The residential school system sought to remove Aboriginal children from their mothers and instil them with the values and religion of the dominant European culture. Governments at the time understood the importance of women in the continuation of culture and through the residential schools curriculum worked on eradicating the Aboriginal student's culture by instilling them with the Canadian culture. Throughout this process Aboriginal women were stripped of their former power and influence and disenfranchised.

Through the *Indian Act*, legislators also assaulted traditional gender roles by removing women from power, and robbed them of their status when women married non-Aboriginal men. Their children could not continue on with the status of the mother.

Moving Forward: Aboriginal Women Today

Today women are reasserting themselves. Much of the power women once held in their communities has been lost. While the residential schools are closed and the *Indian Act* amended, there are still many lingering effects of assimilationist policies. But there is hope. Women are regaining their roles as caretakers, leaders, and nurturers of their communities; they can find their voices once again. It is the aim of this Toolkit to empower Aboriginal women to have a voice in environmental decision-making that affect their communities now and for the next seven generations.

Empowerment

In order to achieve community-based decision making, communities need to be empowered. Empowerment enhances people's possibilities and capabilities to take control of their lives; it increases the ability of individuals to participate in society, take responsibility, and act effectively to protect or change their environment.

Empowerment is a way out of helplessness and hopelessness and liberation from exploitation and oppression. Communities are empowered within by empowered individuals. How do you empower individuals? You empower individuals by providing them with the skills and tools needed to better understand the problems that they and their communities face. You can also do so by guiding them in finding their own solutions to these problems. This can also be achieved through education, such as learning circles.

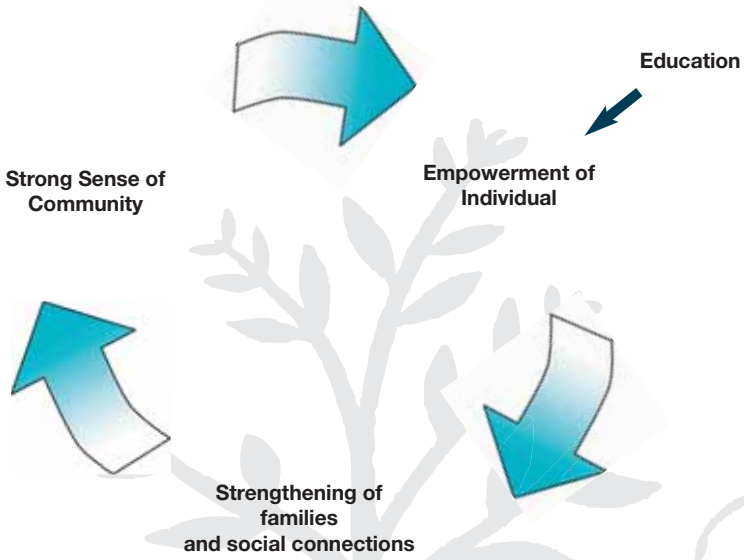


Figure 2: Empowerment Diagram
Source: Adapted from Fisheries Co-management as Empowerment, 2005.

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Slide #2

Suggestions:

How to Achieve Empowerment

- Get involved in your community! Host or attend community events such as:
  - Tree planting
  - Clean up of waterways
  - Traditional ceremonies – feasts, gatherings, Pow-Wows, sharing circles, sweats
  - Community gardening projects
  - Sports events
  - Fairs
  - Bazaars
  - Local school events
  - Any activity that builds community spirit and strengthens social networks
- Involve everyone regardless of their age or gender

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◆ Public Participation

What it is:

Public participation is vital to the environmental decision-making process. It ensures that the concerns and opinions of individual community members are heard and gives a voice to the community when dealing with developers, corporations, organizations, and governments. Public participation is a process where people share and exchange their knowledge and ideas on a subject. Keep in mind that ideas can differ greatly on any subject and that people may not all necessarily understand the issue at hand. People may also enter or leave the process at different stages depending on their availability and other reasons. In addition, public participation has the potential to influence decisions and solve problems. Successful participation builds and strengthens social networks within the community; it needs to be inclusive, respectful, flexible, and adaptive.

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When and How to Use it:

Public participation can be used in two different ways: proactively and reactively. It can be used to gain a greater understanding of the issues and problems that community members care about. Before problems arise it can be used to develop a vision for the community (*see the following section on Community Visioning for more information*). This would be considered as the proactive approach. After the fact, public participation can also be used in reaction to problems or issues that have arisen in your community. Both ways gather the opinions, suggestions, and solutions from the public to address issues of importance to them.

This Toolkit will be of assistance to you regarding one of the most common processes of public participation — the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process where companies or governments seek input from individuals at the community level on their proposed development projects in area.

Goal

The goal of public participation is to empower communities and individuals with the ability to control their own futures. Continued involvement in public engagement processes is essential to ensure your voice is heard and to move beyond merely being informed or consulted. Full citizenship control over decision-making takes proactive planning and sustained involvement.

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Successful Public Participation

In order to achieve successful public participation and achieve the goals of empowerment and control there are a number of key ingredients you will need:

- Mutual respect
- Equality
- Openness
- Inclusiveness
- Clear ground rules
- Addresses complaints and seeks a solution
- An exchange of information and mutual learning
  - One person cannot dominate, everyone must be allowed to share their ideas on the subject
- Flexibility and adaptability
  - If something does not work, try something else that may work
- Adequate time and resources
- Accessibility
  - Make sure the session is held in a place that everyone knows and can get to, including that there are things such as adequate parking spaces
- Allows for new participants to join in on participation process
- Allows many different ways for people to become involved
- Acceptable that there may be different points of view on issues

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Slides #6-7

Benefits and Challenges

There are a number of positive benefits from engaging in the public participation process. These include the following points:

- Strengthening and empowering communities
- Increasing knowledge base
  - This usually comes from the sharing of knowledge among community members
- Helps make sense of complex problems being discussed or planned
  - More heads working on a problem are better than one
- Illuminates common goals and objectives on issue being discussed
- Allows you an opportunity to tell your story or point of view on a particular issue

There are also a number of challenges that you should be aware of that may pose difficulties when seeking successful participation from the public:

- Lack of participation
  - Members of the community may have little to no interest or ability to participate, decreasing the overall effectiveness of the public sessions
- Failure to make every effort to involve community members at the beginning of the public participation process
- Lack of shared decision making
  - No one seems to agree on the best way to move forward
- Lack of understanding of purpose (Why am I here? What good will it do me?)
- Ineffective, costly, and time consuming methods
  - Try to choose ways of engaging in public participation that are within everyone's means (economically, socially, etc.), and that is agreeable to the community. Find out what process works best for your community
- Lack of understanding of information presented and/or poor communication
  - Everyone should be listening respectfully to every participant involved
  - Try to address the potential lack of resources for interested participants to become involved
  - Make sure that every participant has what they need to participate (examples: transportation, childcare, paper, pens, translation, etc.)

- Fear of speaking out in front of the community
- Exhaustion
- Too many issues being brought before the community at one given time causes confusion, frustration and potential exhaustion which can lead to breakdown during communications.

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Slides #8-10

Some Ideas

Public participation sessions can take many forms and should be tailored to fit the needs of the community. More formal public participation processes include workshops, community meetings, roundtables, brainstorming sessions, and learning or talking circles. Public participation does not need to be so formal, as it can involve likeminded community members that are interested in sharing ideas on how to address a potential issue. It can include meetings over coffee, tea, dessert, potluck lunches, or picnics; anything that brings together members of the community. Try to utilize new and innovative methods such as the internet to involve the community, especially the youth. Encourage community members to tell their stories and perspectives on issues while listening to points being shared. Also try to make the experience fun and educational for those involved. Be sure that this meeting time fits the schedule of women.

Suggestion:

- Workshops
- Learning and talking circles
- Brainstorming sessions
- Meetings over coffee/tea, dessert
- Potluck lunches or picnics
- Tupperware or candle parties
- Craft circles
- Door-to-door surveys
- Involve the youth through recreational events for example. Remember that they are the future and your decisions will affect them for years to come, therefore they too should have their say
- Utilize new media to engage younger community members. Examples include:
  - Facebook groups
  - Discussion forums/chat groups
  - Blogs

- YouTube videos
- Forwarding informational e-mails

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		gathering information	distributing information	problem solving	collaboration
Passive information					
	advertisements		X		
	news conferences		X		
	websites	X	X		
	technical reports		X		
	newspaper		X		
	television		X		
Indirect (non face-to-face)					
	comment sheet	X			
	toll free line	X			
	internet submission	X			
	survey	X			
Direct (face-to-face) active - general					
	briefings		X		
	hotline	X			
	field office	X	X		
	technical assistance		X		
	contact person	X			
	interviews	X			
Direct - small group					
	PAC	X	X	X	X
	focus group	X	X		
	workshop	X	X		X
	design charette	X	X	X	X
	mediation and nogotiation			X	
Direct - large					
	open house	X	X		
	deliberative polling	X			
Newer					
	photo elicitation	X	X		
	GIS	X	X		
	visualization	X	X		

Table 1: Forms of Public Participation

Source: Adapted from: Public involvement in Environmental Assessment: The Case of the Nonparticipant. Environmental Management, 2002, and Public Participation in Sustainable Forest Management: A Reference Guide. Sustainable Forest Management Network, 2006.

Community Visioning

What it is:

Community visioning is a mental picture of what community members want their community to look and feel like now and for the next seven generations. It is an effective planning tool that allows communities to determine their priorities early on and set goals in order to help guide their future. It considers a broad range of concerns and opportunities, identifies community capacity gaps/opportunities, and seeks active public participation. Its goal is to foster meaningful problem solving, action planning, and community consensus. To be successful it must include input from those in the community. Often included with this vision is an action plan – a detailed list of actions needed to accomplish the vision.

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How it is Created:

A community vision is created through public participation sessions. Community members come together to discuss key priorities and concerns. Below is a flowchart that shows the possible path that community visioning can take. Visioning can be as simple as a series of public participation sessions. However simple, this is a guide to further planning. The community visioning process should be designed to suit the immediate and/or future needs and budget of the community.

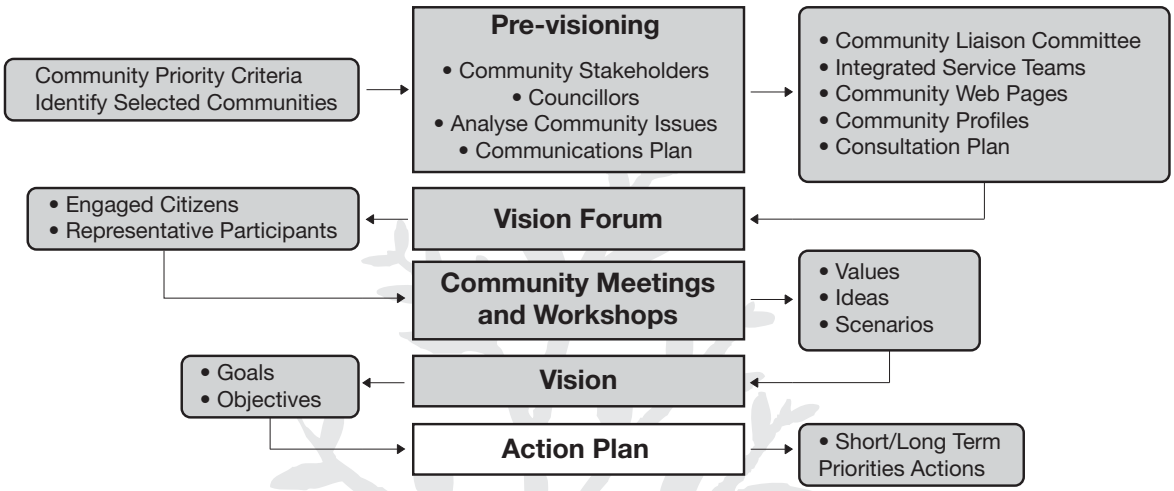

Figure 3 : Community Visioning Process

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Possible Areas of Consideration:

Community visions can encompass a wide variety of issues and concerns. Here are some possible issues to consider when creating a community vision:

- Need for community services and facilities
  - Community centres
  - Recreation facilities
  - Library
  - Schools
  - Youth services and activities
  - Drug and alcohol services
  - Family services
  - Health services
  - Services for Elders

- Safety
- Housing
- Community pride and quality of life
  - Building quality
  - Community involvement
  - Cultural identity
  - Graffiti control
  - Noise control
- Transportation
  - Roads and highways
- Economic development
- Community boundaries
- Environment
  - Water quality and quantity
  - Energy needs and conservation methods
  - Conservation of plant and animal species (Example: Species at Risk)
  - Waste collection and treatment
  - Natural resource development

Suggestion:

Here are some resources for more information and examples of community visioning projects:

- Building Our Future: A Guide to Community Visioning
  www.drs.wisc.edu/green/_documents/_community/Building%20Our%20Future%20-%20A%20Guide%20to%20Community%20Visioning.pdf.

  Halifax Regional Municipality's Community Visioning Projects
  www.halifax.ca/visionHRM//

  Pacheedaht First Nation's Community Visioning Project
  www.commongroundproject.ca/node/19

- The City of Vancouver's Community Vision
  www.vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/cityplan/Visions/
- A sample of an American website
  www.sustainable.org/creating/vision.html

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The Role of the Media in Environmental Decision-Making

The news media can be an excellent research tool, providing concise and easy to understand summaries of complex environmental issues. Copies of current newspaper and magazine articles can be obtained from the internet or your local library. Some examples of useful media sources include:

- Local and national newspapers
- News, science, and nature magazines
- Local and national radio and television stations
- News services such as Canadian Press and Associated Press
- Specific newspaper and magazine websites:
  - www.ammsa.com/windspeaker/
  - www.aptn.ca
  - www.cbc.ca
  - www.ctv.ca
  - www.nationalpost.com
  - www.theglobeandmail.com
  - www.theturtleislandnews.com

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Slides #17-18

The media can also be a useful communication tool. It can be used to gain awareness of and support for issues your community may be facing. It can also be used to educate local community members on important issues and to advertise upcoming community meetings and public participation sessions. Local newspapers, radio, and television stations are particularly helpful in this regard. Get to know your local media contacts.

While the media can be a valuable source of information on environmental issues, it is also important to be critical and watch for bias and sensationalism. Some things to keep in mind when using the media as a research tool:

- Most newspapers, radio, and television stations are owned and operated as businesses to make money and are influenced by corporate agendas
- Media exists to sell itself, therefore it reflects what it thinks people want to hear, see and read
- Journalists are not without their own biases
- Both sides of the story need to be provided by media, but is not always reflected
- Television shows, radio programs and news articles are all edited for style, content, and space/time constraints
- Be sure to research issues from a number of different media sources to try to eliminate these biases and discover "the facts"

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◆ Researching

One of the first steps in decision-making is knowing more about an issue. This can be done in a number of ways. There are a number of free resources available through the work of Environmental Non-Government Organizations (eNGOs) as well as stewardship organizations. These groups are usually well informed of the local environmental and social conditions of an area and are always looking to involve community members. These can be good places to get information on an issue that is currently happening and to also find out what has been done in the past.

Literature is readily accessible from these sources and is often free of charge. Organizations such as these may also have access to technical and professional experts in environment related fields which may be useful for clarification on certain issues.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) held by the people is a valued source of information within Aboriginal communities. Speaking to the Elders in your community may help to increase your education on an environmental issue. Elders may guide you to other resources or give you advice on how to approach community involvement on an environmental issue.

Internet resources which you may consider to use when researching environmental issues include:

- Canadian Environmental Network – www.cen-rce.org/eng/index.html
- Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) – www.cier.ca
- Dalhousie University – School for Resource and Environmental Management – sres.management.dal.ca
- Ecology Action Centre – www.ecologyaction.ca
- First Nations University of Canada – www.firstnationsuniversity.ca
- Lakehead University - Forestry and Environmental Science – www.lakeheadu.ca
- McMaster University – Environment and Health – www.mcmaster.ca
- National Aboriginal Forestry Association – nafaforestry.org
- National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association – www.nalma.ca
- Nova Scotia Environmental Network – www.nsen.ca/join.php
- Trent University – Environment and Resource Studies – www.trentu.ca
- University of Victoria – School of Environmental Studies – www.uvic.ca

Internet Search Engines Are Valuable Tools

The internet is also a valuable searching tool. If you do not have access to a computer with internet, you may have the opportunity to access the internet in other places (Examples: at friends, families, your local public library, internet cafés, etc.).

(See Appendix A – Internet Researching)

Public Libraries

Public libraries contain a wealth of information. If you need help finding something or do not know where to start your search make use of your public library. Librarians are there to help their community get access to information. Tell them what you are looking for and see what information is available on the topic. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Most public libraries will also have computers with internet access.

Letter Writing

A great deal can be accomplished through community efforts such as letter writing campaigns. Write a letter to your federal Member of Parliament (MP) or your local provincial/territorial political representative who can help establish a unified voice in your community. Letters should be direct, brief and organized. A general letter writing template has been provided.

(See Appendix B – Sample Letter – Letter regarding a change in zoning and its effect on a community)

Example of Letter Writing Template

Your Name
Your Mailing Address
(2 spaces)

Date
(2 spaces)

Official's Name, Title
Full Mailing Address
(1 space)
Dear Sir or Madam _____:
(1 space)
Body of your letter should have several parts including the following:

1. Identification of the issue. Describe briefly what issue you are writing about and why it is important to you and/or your community.
2. A request for action and what you would like your official to do. It may also be beneficial to mention what positive environmental actions have been taken by you or your community regarding the issue.

Thank the official for their time, and request a response to your letter.
(1 space)
Sincerely,

(Your signature)

Your Name

Successful Public Participation Handout

What is it?

- It is a sharing of knowledge and exchange of ideas
- Has the potential to influence decisions or outcomes
- Can solve problems
- It is a two-way process
- Includes as many perspectives as possible on an issue

Goal

- The goal of public participation is to empower communities and individuals and to give them the ability to control their own futures as well as make informed decisions on the issue(s) at hand.

Key Ingredients

- Mutual respect
- Equality
- Openness
- Inclusiveness
- Has clear ground rules
- Addresses complaints and seeks a solution
- Should include an exchange of information and mutual learning
- Flexible and adaptive
- Ensures adequate time and resources
- Ensures accessibility
- Allows for new participants to join in on process
- Allows many different ways for people to be involved
- Acceptable that there may be different points of view

(Arnstein, 1969)

Benefits

- Strengthens and empowers communities
- Increases knowledge base
- Helps make sense of complex problems
- Illuminates common goals and objectives on issue
- Allows you an opportunity to tell your story

Possible Challenges

- Lack of participation
- Failure to make every effort to involve community members at the beginning of process
- Lack of shared decision making
- Lack of understanding of purpose (Why am I here? What good will it do me?)
- Ineffective, costly, and time consuming methods
- Lack of understanding of information and poor communication
- Lack of resources for interested participants
- Fear of speaking out in front of the community

Suggestions

- To overcome some of these challenges we need to be creative in how to get the community together
- Public participation can be anything where members of the community share and discuss ideas
- Make efforts to integrate the public participation process into any of the following community events:
  - Workshops
  - Learning and talking circles
  - Brainstorming sessions
  - Meetings over coffee/tea, dessert
  - Potluck lunches or picnics
  - Tupperware or candle parties
  - Craft circles
  - Door to door surveys
- Involve youth through recreational events. They are the future and your decisions will affect them for years to come, therefore they too should have their say
- Utilize new media to engage younger community members. Examples include:
  - Facebook groups
  - Discussion forums/chat groups
  - Blogs
  - YouTube videos

Notes

Notes

Being Proactive

- Organize – get active around the issues
- Lobby
- Write letters of support
- Write Press Releases – send to media outlets, let your voice be heard
- Write Briefing Notes for those in your group about the issues and your positions

Need for

- Linkages with other community organizations
- Local relationships – find out what other community members are doing
- Reaching out to people
- Cooperating and collaborating
- Looking outside of the government and government resources
  - Other communities
  - eNGOs
- Build relationships and partnerships
- Take information you learn from others and apply it to your community
- Encourage leadership, empower, educate yourself
- Do not be afraid to approach international organizations
- Do not forget about power relations and people dynamics

How do you get people to become aware of an issue? How do you encourage people to come out and get involved? What if people are disengaged or overwhelmed with an issue, how then can we help them get involved?

- Social gatherings
- Treat meetings as a chance to meet new people
- Provide opportunities for women to expand their networks
- Promote that women will learn something new
- Chance to gain valuable experience

At the national level NWAC can help by providing research guidance, advice, resources provide advocacy, and educational opportunities;

- At the provincial/territorial level – help local chapters of the association deliver messages
- At the local level – know your audience and how to reach them. Be proactive in securing participation of local women. Represent their needs and provide them with feedback on issues/events they are involved in.

Checklists

In getting your issue heard, consider utilizing any or all of the following resources:

- Public service announcements (Examples: APTN, CBC, CPAC, Eastlink) – Broadcast stations are required to provide public service announcements as part of their licensing requirements – take advantage of that – it helps them fill their air space and meet their mandate
- Local radio call-in shows
- Local television public service pages
- First Net Video Conferencing links all schools up to video-conference broadcasts
- Facebook
- Schools
- Articles in local papers, local radio and TV stations
- Colleges and Universities (Examples: students, professors, specific programs)
- eNGOs (Examples: Evergreen and the Ecology Action Centre, etc.)
- Advertising or marketing at cultural events
- Recreation centre/arena/curling rink
- Local notice boards
- Word of mouth
- Creating a video on an issue and posting it online (Example: www.YouTube.com)
- BE CREATIVE!

Notes

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

What is Traditional Ecological Knowledge?

TEK is a sophisticated knowledge possessed by a group or individual about an environment as a result of having lived in and observed an environment for generations. It is both evolving and current, and incorporates an historical, cultural and spiritual perspective of our existence in that environment. It is a requirement in Canada that TEK be considered and incorporated into Environmental Assessment. The unique challenge is learning to see the strengths of Indigenous knowledge with the strengths of western scientific knowledge.

Tool: PowerPoint "*Traditional Ecological Knowledge*"

Slides #2 to 4

Using Traditional Ecological Knowledge?

Documentation and communication of TEK requires the support, cooperation, and involvement of the community. Groups differ on who holds TEK, how it is shared, and who has authority to pass it on. You will need to know if there are ethical standards in place for the collection, use, and distribution of TEK. What are the confidentiality requirements?

In the scoping phase of an Environmental Assessment, it is important to present how TEK is collected, who collects it, and how it is used and distributed. One example of how you might influence the process of collection and presentation of TEK data is to require the presentation of your TEK knowledge by someone within your community to an Environmental Panel during the review process, rather than handing it over to the proponent.

Legal Considerations

Is there an ethics approval process or protocols in place for the collection, use and distribution of TEK? Who owns the data? This has implications under intellectual property rights. How can you control how this information is presented?

The use of TEK can have legal implications when it is used in a regulatory process or for purposes of government/Aboriginal consultations and can also have impacts on the decision of land claims or treaty negotiations.

Protecting Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Conventional Intellectual Property Right laws offer very limited protection of TEK, because it generally grants protection to an individual. TEK tends to be held collectively by a community. It is important for communities to seek protection of their TEK through agreement with the proponent.

Suggestion:
For additional information on TEK check out the following websites:

- Aboriginal Canada Portal Traditional Ecological Knowledge
  www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/en/ao27021.html
- Alaska Native Knowledge Network
  www.ankn.uaf.edu/IKS/tek.html
- Canadian Arctic Resources Committee
  www.carc.org/

When to ask for help? How to ask for help?

What and Who is an Environmental Technical Expert?

A number of agencies exist across the country which provides environmental consulting services to Aboriginal communities. These particular organizations can provide clarity on environmental issues while considering cultural priorities and concerns.

How to find an environmental technical expert

- Try searching for a technical expert in a variety of different ways (Examples: researching experts, phoning and internet searching, etc.).
- Are there any listed in your local phonebook under “Environment”?
- Do you or someone in the community know of someone that works in a related field?
- Try doing a search on the internet (www.google.ca). To see what results you get use key words such as “environmental consultants” or “site assessment consultants” or “environmental monitoring” in your search.
- Contacting your local association chapter (www.nwac-hq.org/en/ptma.html) and asking questions about where to find one in your area.

Additional Information

You can also find companies under the following website links:

- Aboriginal Business Directory (Industry Canada) – www.ic.gc.ca
- Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources – www.cier.ca
- National Aboriginal Forestry Association – www.nafaforestry.org
- National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association – www.nalma.ca

Notes

Environmental Assessment Basics

What is an Environmental Assessment?

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is a process used to identify and mitigate the environmental effects a project may have on the environment before the project is carried out. It can also be referred to as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The official EA process begins well into the development of a project concept and the community, including Aboriginal women, might want to seek involvement as early as possible. This involvement may include aspects mentioned earlier on in the Community Visioning section of this toolkit.

The information on the EA or EIA process can be accessed through the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which is a publicly available document published and distributed by the company funding the project (proponent).

Environmental Site Assessment is a different concept. Environmental site assessment is the process of identifying contaminants on a site.

What are the Benefits of an Environmental Assessment?

- With the necessity to include TEK in an EA, there is an opportunity to be involved
- Public awareness of area projects
- Public participation
- Improvements in the project design
- Reduce environmental impact by identifying impacts and finding ways to minimize the impact(s)
- Increased accountability for decision-making

What are the Limitations of an Environmental Assessment?

Some of the limitations of an EA are:

- There is uncertainty related to predicting, forecasting and mitigating impacts
- Everyone has a different definition of significant environmental impacts
- TEK not understood or weighted accordingly
- It is impossible to have all the information. Therefore, decisions may have to be made with best available information at the time.

Overview of the Environmental Assessment Process

The Environmental Assessment process can be a very long and complicated process. It is important to be aware that the federal government has its own EA process and every province also has its own EA process. The federal and provincial EA processes are different. Many projects may only require a federal EA or just a provincial EA. However, it is also possible that a project will require both a federal and a provincial EA. In the event that both a federal and provincial EA may be needed for a proposed project they will be assessed together.

Provincial/Territorial

Information on individual provincial processes and their respective legislation are not provided in this document. However, links to each provincial EA website is as follows:

Provincial Environmental Assessment Offices

• Alberta	www.environment.alberta.ca/1274.html
• British Columbia	www.eao.gov.bc.ca/
• Manitoba	www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/
• New Brunswick	English – www.gnb.ca/0009/0377/0002/index-e.asp French – www.gnb.ca/0009/0377/0002/index-f.asp
• Newfoundland & Labrador	www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/Env/EA%202001/pages/index.htm
• Northwest Territories	www.ceaa.gc.ca
• Nova Scotia	www.gov.ns.ca/nse/ea/
• Nunavut	www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nu/nuv/eap_e.html www.ceaa.gc.ca/
• Ontario	www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ea/English/
• Prince Edward Island	www.peigov.ca/enveng/pp-info/index.php3
• Québec	English – www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/evaluations/inter_en.htm French – www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/evaluations/inter.htm
• Saskatchewan	www.environment.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=dd506e76-4819-4493-a22b-6411133ca469
• Yukon	www.yesab.ca/assessments/

Federal

What is the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act?

The *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) is a piece of legislation that outlines the responsibilities and procedures involved in a Federal EA. The CEAA has four essential regulations attached to it:

- Law List Regulations
- Inclusion List Regulations
- Exclusion List Regulations
- Comprehensive Study List

The regulations provide more detail on when a federal EA may be needed (Law List Regulations), what projects may require a Federal EA (Inclusion List) and what projects do not require a Federal EA (Exclusion List). The comprehensive study list details which projects are required to undergo a comprehensive study.

Find more information on the federal process by visiting this website: www.ceaa.gc.ca.

What is the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency?

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) is an independent federal government agency. The role of the Agency is to provide Canadians with high-quality Environmental Assessments that contribute to informed decision making, in the support of sustainable development. The Agency is accountable to the Minister of the Environment.

The Agency does not conduct the actual EA, however, the Agency does:

- Advise the developer (proponent) on interpretation and application of the CEAA
- Coordinates federal government involvement
- Harmonizes EA processes and coordinates with provincial governments when there is a joint EA
- Provides training to practitioners and others
- Provides administrative support to Panel Reviews

When does the CEAA apply?

A federal EA can be triggered by four (4) events:

- If a federal authority proposes a project. Example: Department of Fisheries and Oceans wants to build a wharf.
- If there is federal money involved in developing the project.
- If a federal authority transfers control of federal land for a project.
- If a federal authority provides a license or permit that allows the project to be carried out.

For more information on CEAA visit: www.ceaa.gc.ca/010/basics_e.htm#9.

Types of Assessments

Under the CEAA there are four (4) types of Environmental Assessments:

- Screenings – 90-95% of EAs completed
- Comprehensive Studies – 5-10% of EAs completed
- Mediation
- Review Panel

The majority of EAs are assessed through screenings (90-95%) while only a small percentage (5-10%) is assessed through a comprehensive study. Screenings are smaller scale projects. Comprehensive studies tend to be larger scale projects that may cause significant environmental effects. Examples of larger projects may be nuclear power developments, large oil and gas operations or industrial facilities. Some projects are automatically required to go through a comprehensive study, based on the nature and scale of the project; these projects are listed in the comprehensive study list regulations.

Additionally, near the beginning of the EA process the Minister of Environment will decide if the project will:

- Continue to be assessed as a comprehensive study, with the Minister of Environment making the final decision about the future of the project or if it should be referred to any of the following:
  - A mediator or
  - Panel review – If a panel review is chosen, the government will form a panel. The panel is responsible for reviewing all the EA information and listening to stakeholder concerns. The panel will make its own recommendations to the Minister of Environment about the future of the project. In the end the Minister of Environment makes the final decision on the project.

For additional information on the basics of Environmental Assessment visit this website:

www.ceaa.gc.ca/010/basics_e.htm.

◆ Joint Review Processes

What is a Joint Review Process?

A joint review process occurs when a project involves two levels of government (provincial/territorial and federal). In these circumstances, a review (board or) panel of experts is put together collectively by the federal and provincial/territorial Ministers of Environment. The panel's job is to objectively assess the likely impacts of a project. The board will submit their views and recommendations on the future of the project to both Ministers of Environment. There is an agreement in place for how final decisions are made.

◆ Self Government and Comprehensive Land Claim Agreements

If your community is part of a negotiated self-government agreement or if your territory is under a comprehensive land claim agreement, there should be specific clauses dealing with how environmental issues will be resolved. If your community is part of a process that is negotiating a self-government agreement or comprehensive land claim agreement, you need to know what your options are under those negotiations.

Where to look to find a self-government agreement:
www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/agr/index_e.html#FinalAgreements1

Where to look to find a comprehensive land claim agreement:
www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/agr/index_e.html#FinalAgreements2

Suggestion: It is important that you understand the legal terminology that applies to your rights that could be affected in environmental decision-making.

Tool: PowerPoint – *"Jurisdictional Issues - What do you need to know in terms of environmental issues?"*
Slides #1 to 12

Basic Steps of an Environmental Assessment

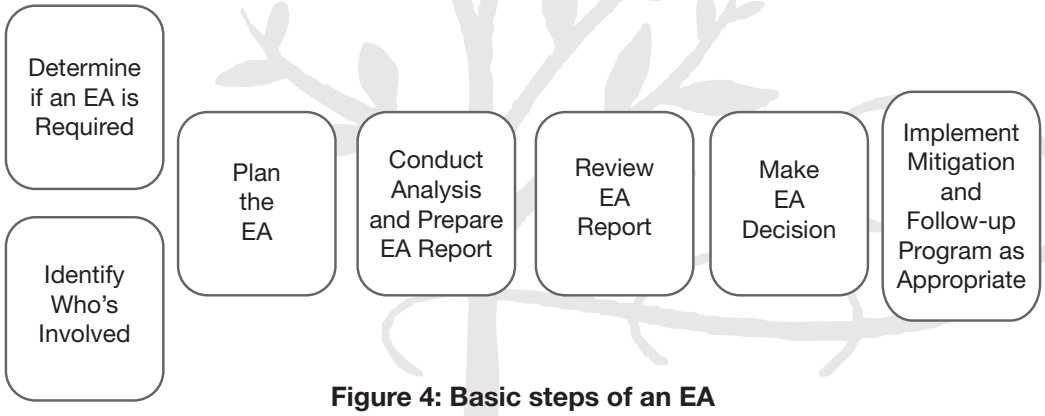


Figure 4: Basic steps of an EA

Source: Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (www.ceaa.gc.ca/index_e.htm)

1. Determine if an EA is Required (Federally, Provincially/Territorial, or both)

The first step to any EA is to determine if an EA is required. To determine if an EA is required the company who owns the project (the proponent) will need to contact the appropriate agency (federal or provincial or both). If an EA is required by either the federal or provincial/territorial government appropriate paper work must be filed.

The federal and all provincial/territorial governments have EA legislation. Details on the federal EA legislation and process can be found above. Specific provincial process and legislation is not provided in this document. However, links to each provincial Environmental Assessment process can be found in the additional information section.

2. Scoping

Scoping is a process that focuses assessment of a project on those issues and concerns that are most important to you and other interested parties. The process looks at the natural and human environment, and determines how widespread the effects may be and how far into the past and future you need your information to cover in order to make an informed decision. An open scoping process should allow the

public to gain a full understanding of the proposed project, looks at alternatives to the project, establishes those baselines against which you will measure change, establishes the boundaries of the impacts (in space and time), and identifies those issues and concerns that are key and should be subject to further study. Participation in the scoping exercise can increase the likelihood that you will see your issues and concerns reflected in the Environmental Impact Statement which the project owner has to get past the approval process.

Tool: PowerPoint – *"Scoping in Environmental Assessment"*

Slides #1-9

3. Conduct the EA

Project Description

The project description is critical to the EA and it should give you a basic understanding of the project. The project description should include the following (however it is not limited to):

- The name of the project
- Information on the owner of the project
- The exact location of the project (usually maps are included)
- The type of facility or description of work completed
- The projected time length of the project

Project Purpose

All projects have a purpose and it is the responsibility of the owner to ensure the public knows the reason of the project.

Suggestion: If you do not understand the project description or the purpose of the project is not clearly defined contact the proponent or government for more information.

Alternatives to the Project

Has the proponent considered and clearly presented alternatives to the project? Have you considered alternative approaches to carrying out the project?

Suggestion: If alternatives have not been considered, you might want to hold a community brainstorming session to inform yourself about alternatives.

Baseline Data

Baseline data is information on the condition of an environment before project development. This information is usually used to compare changes in the environment that occur as a result of a project after it has been developed. This data is meant to give a perspective on what the current state of the environment is and what the likely future state of the environment will be without the proposed project

or activity. It is often useful to think of baseline data as a measuring stick to compare the changes in the environment in the future to the state in the past.

Baselines may also be referred to as background data or information. If a project does not specifically use the word "baseline" it might still be represented, but under a different name, like background, elementary, historical or other phrases.

Tool: PowerPoint *"Baselines and Monitoring – What are they and how they help"*
Slide #2

Caution should be taken with baselines because change in environments and ecosystems naturally occur. Therefore, changes to the environment are not necessarily always bad, nor can they always be attributed to a project. Attention should be paid to the size of the changes and what the effects of these changes are to the environment and to the community.

Tool: PowerPoint *"Baselines and Monitoring – What are they and how they help"*
Slide #3

Some things to consider in the baseline studies which should be presented in an environmental assessment document are the spatial (space) and temporal (time) scales of the project. Have these been clearly defined? Spatially, does the project look at the environment at a local, regional, or national scale? Do you understand these scales and how will they affect your community?

Temporally, or in terms of timelines, how long will the project persist? Is there a lifespan for the project (example: is it proposed to last for decades or longer?). How will the timeline and lifespan of the project affect your community?

The definition of large scale and small scale will be relative to what your community defines as long term and short term, which may or may not contrast with how the project is described in the EA document. Some examples of projects at different scales include the following:

Large spatial scale: Construction of a highway may cross many boundaries, go through many towns or across a region.

Small spatial scale: Construction of a wharf would be local and specific to one area.

Long term temporal scale: Construction and operation of a nuclear power plant (example: 50 years of operation)

Short term temporal scale: Operation or a gold mine (example: operation of 5 years).

Tool: PowerPoint *"Baselines and Monitoring – What are they and how they help"*
Slide #4

You may see the term VEC or Valued Ecosystem Component in relation to baseline studies. These are considered aspects of the environment, both physical and human which are important to the public or from an ecological perspective.

Examples of VECs identified in the Voisey's Bay EIS: Water, Caribou, Plant Communities, Family Community and Aboriginal land use.

Tool: PowerPoint *"Baselines and Monitoring – What they are and how they help"*
Slide #5

Forecasting and Determining Impact Significance

Forecasting is used to predict the future state of the environment. Forecasting requires three crucial steps:

- Determining the baseline (as discussed above)
- Determining the future conditions of the area with the project development
- Determining the future condition of the area without the project development

It is inaccurate to compare the future conditions of the area with the project development to the current condition of the area. The environment is constantly changing and the future of the area with or without the project will not be the same as it is today.

A few things to consider when forecasting are:

- The nature of the predicted impact (adverse, additive, antagonistic, beneficial)
- The temporal characteristics (duration, rate of change slow vs. fast)
- The magnitude (size, direction, and spatial extent)
- The degree of reversibility
- The likelihood that the predicted impact with actually occur

There are numerous methods and techniques to assist in impact prediction. One of the most common techniques used is modelling. Additionally, if there are similar projects to the one being assessed then forecasting knowledge from those previous projects may be useful. Keep in mind that there may be direct, secondary, and even cumulative impacts to consider.

Forecasting may help to determine the impact the project may have on the environment. Once the impact has been determined mitigation measure can be put in place to minimize the impact.

Things to consider when determining the significance of impacts are:

- The irreversibility of the impact
- The adverse effects of the impact
- The frequency and duration of the impact
- The cumulative effects of the impact
- The existing regulations associated with the impact
- The geographical extent of the adverse effect

Suggestion: Do you want to see how impacts have been predicted and minimized for similar projects that have been completed in your area, province or country? To find information on similar projects contact your provincial environmental assessment office. To find information on federal projects contact the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency or check the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry at: www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/index_e.cfm

Tool: PowerPoint *"Forecasting"*

Slides #1-13

Addressing Socio-economic and Cultural Effects

An EA that has been well done will address the social, economic and cultural impacts of the project. A social impact can be described as an action (such as a new facility) that will change the way people live, work, play, or relate to one another in the area. A cultural impact may include changes to beliefs, norms, and values.

A social impact assessment should be completed as part of the EA. The social impact assessment will try to quantify the social change that may result from the project. Examples of social impacts may be changes to your way of life, your culture, your community, your health and well-being, and your fears and aspirations.

Social Impact Assessments are done to help individuals, communities, government and private sector understand how a project could have social consequence (positive or negative). Indicators of social impacts include:

- Population Characteristics – changes in number, density, and distribution
- Community Composition – changes in image, power structures, conflicts with outsiders, and alterations in present institutions
- Community Attitudes and Identity – changes in attitudes, values, local government and employment
- Individuals and families – change in family structure, social relations, and perceptions of change in daily life
- Community infrastructure – roads, bridges, plumbing, public buildings, etc.
- Social justice – effect on equality, human rights, and public participation in decision-making

Social, economic and cultural effects can be viewed positively and negatively. The goal of an EA is to maximum the positive impacts or changes while minimizing the negative impacts or changes that could occur as a result of the project.

Social impact assessments are where community has an opportunity to share their local knowledge and wisdom. This process of addressing Social Impact Assessments and cultural effects could be connected back to the community vision for itself.

Tool: PowerPoint ☒ *"Social Impact Assessment"*

Slides #1-12

Addressing Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects assessment is the consideration of the environmental effects that a specific project will have along with the environmental effects from surrounding projects or activities. Essentially, this view takes a holistic look at the environment and how the project will affect various aspects. Consider carbon dioxide emissions as an example. The EA document will mostly consider the effects that carbon dioxide released from a specific project will have on certain aspects of the environment. However, in cumulative effects, the emissions of carbon dioxide from the particular project as well as other sources of CO^2 must be considered together. Additionally, future sources of CO^2 would have to be considered. Specifically, think about the effects on the environment from three operational natural gas plants. Or the effects on a water source if it is being used for municipal, industrial and irrigation purposes.

It is important to note that although consideration of cumulative effects is required under a federal EA process, not all provinces require that it be done. For more information on whether your province requires cumulative effects assessment in a provincial EA, please refer to the provincial websites listing in this Toolkit.

Think about what other projects or activities exist in and around your community and how they might contribute to environmental effects. Remember that cumulative effects are supposed to consider larger areas and longer lengths of time, so there might be existing projects outside your community that would still be relevant for consideration.

Suggestion: You might want to have a meeting with members of surrounding communities to find out what existing projects are there. Or do some additional research to find out what other projects are surrounding your area.

Have these projects been considered in a project report?

Suggestion: If cumulative effects are not being considered, you might want to bring this up in a community meeting or with the proponent of a project during public participation portions of the process.

Managing Impacts and Addressing Mitigation Options

Once the impacts and their significance have been determined, the next step to consider is how to manage these impacts. Plans or strategies are designed to avoid or alleviate the expected impact. Examples of avoiding an impact could be moving an access road to a different location to avoid destroying the habitat of birds. Examples of alleviating the impact of noise caused by construction could be specifying and limiting the hours of construction.

Four strategies to managing impacts are:

- Avoidance – if the impact can be avoided step should be taken to ensure it is
- Mitigation – if the impact cannot be avoided then plans or strategies to be put in place to minimize the impact?

- Rectification – if mitigation measure have been put in place and there is still an impact then is there any way to remedy the impact?
- Compensation – if no other options are available and impacts still remain then compensation for the damage done could be negotiated

Monitoring

Monitoring programs are meant to measure expected changes as a result of a project. This is usually done by collecting data to provide information on the characteristics and functioning of environmental and social variables. What monitoring methods are proposed for the project? How frequently will they occur and who collects and analyses the data? Are there monitoring methods to detect early warnings to changes in the environment? How long are monitoring programs proposed to take place? Do you have any other suggestions for how monitoring might be done, or what techniques can be applied to monitor a project?

Tool: PowerPoint *"Baselines and Monitoring – What they are and how they help"*

Slides # 6-9

4. Review EA Report

The results and findings of the EA will be found in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the written report. Once the report has been completed it will be submitted to the appropriate government body.

The public will have the opportunity to submit comments on the written report. This is the final opportunity for any stakeholder to have their voice heard. Be aware there is a time limit to submit comments.

Suggestion:

Has your voice been heard? Is there any part of the EA you do not agree with? If the project does proceed is there an opportunity for you to be involved in follow up or monitoring programs? Take this opportunity to submit your comments on the EA report.

5. Making an EA Decision

Once the EA report has been filed with the appropriate government agency the government will review the EA before making a final decision on the project. Depending on the type of project, the government agency or the minister(s) of the reviewing department(s) will make the decision on the future of the project. If the project is approved there are usually terms and conditions attached to the project.

6. Follow-up Program (as appropriate)

If the project is approved for development follow-up programs may be required.

Suggestion: Is there a chance for your community to become involved in the follow-up program? Talk to owner of the project to see if you can get involved.

Funding Sources

Aboriginal Species at Risk Program

The Aboriginal Species at Risk Program has created two separate funds for Aboriginal peoples to access; The Aboriginal Capacity Building Fund and the Aboriginal Critical Habitat Protection Fund.

These two (2) funds exist to allow Aboriginal people to actively participate in the conservation of species at risk. For more information on the specifics of each program and how to get involved, visit the following website: www.sararegistry.gc.ca/involved/funding/asrp_e.cfm.

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Participant Funding Program

This program provides support to Individuals, Aboriginal organizations and incorporated not-for-profit organizations that may have a direct interest in the project, such as living or owning property in the project area or have traditional knowledge relevant to the Environmental Assessment.

A Guide to the Participant Funding Program can be found at:

www.ceaa.gc.ca/010/0001/0002/index_e.htm.

Is there an Environmental Assessment going on in or near your community?

If so, where would you look?

If there is a project going on in your area, a registration document has to be printed in your newspaper. This is what one looks like:

NOTICE

Registration of Undertaking for Environmental Assessment ENVIRONMENT ACT

This is to advise that on ***(DATE of REGISTRATION), (COMPANY)*** registered a ***(PROJECT NAME)*** for environmental assessment, in accordance with Part IV of the Enironment Act.

The purpose of the proposed undertaking is to ***(BRIEF 2 - 3 SENTENCE DESCRIPTION, INCLUDING PROPOSED LOCATION, PROPOSED COMMENCEMENT DATE AND PROJECT SCHEDULE WHERE APPLICABLE)***

Copies of the environmental assessment registration information may be examined at the following locations:

- ***1st Public viewing location provided by the Proponent (e.g. local town office)***
- ***2nd Public viewing location provided by the Proponent (e.g. local library, corner store or other public location)***
- Clean Nova Scotia, 126 Portland Street Dartmouth, NS
- Ecology Action Centre, Suite 31, 1568 Argyle St., Halifax, NS
- Nova Scotia Department of Environment & Labour, **Regional Office**
- Nova Scotia Deprartment of Environment & Labour, 5th floor Library, 5151 Terminal Road, Halifax, NS
- EA website (when available) at www.gov.ns.ca/enla/ess/ea

The public is invited to submit written comments to:
Environmental Assessment Branch
Nova Scotia Department of Environment & Labour
P.O. Box 697, Halifax, NS, B3J 2T8
on or before ***(deadline date for public comments provided by NSDEL)*** or contact the department by phone at (902) 424-3230, by fax at (902) 424-0503, or by e-mail at EA@gov.ns.ca.

All comments received will be placed in the public file located in the library on the fifth floor of the Nova Scotia Department of Environment & Labour, Halifax Office, 5151 Terminal Road.

Published by: ***(COMPANY NAME AND ADDRESS)***

Figure 5: Sample of a Public Notice
Source: Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour.
Website: http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/ea/docs/EA.Guide-Proponents.pdf

◆ Additional Information

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	www.ceaa.gc.ca
International Association of Impact Assessment	www.iaia.org

Provincial Environmental Assessment Offices

• Alberta	www.environment.alberta.ca/1274.html
• British Columbia	www.eao.gov.bc.ca/
• Manitoba	www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/
• New Brunswick	English – www.gnb.ca/0009/0377/0002/index-e.asp French – www.gnb.ca/0009/0377/0002/index-f.asp
• Newfoundland & Labrador	www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/Env/EA%202001/pages/index.htm
• Northwest Territories	www.ceaa.gc.ca
• Nova Scotia	www.gov.ns.ca/nse/ea/
• Nunavut	www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nu/nuv/eap_e.html www.ceaa.gc.ca/
• Ontario	www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ea/English/
• Prince Edward Island	www.peigov.ca/enveng/pp-info/index.php3
• Québec	English – www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/evaluations/inter_en.htm French – www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/evaluations/inter.htm
• Saskatchewan	www.environment.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=dd506e76-4819-4493-a22b-6411133ca469
• Yukon	www.yesab.ca/assessments/

◆ Checklists

EA Checklist

- Do you have a general understanding of the project?

  For example:
  - Do you know who the proponent (owner of the project) is?
  - Project design
  - Construction activities and timing
  - The benefits and cost of doing and not doing the project
  - Biophysical and socio-economic interactions the project will have on your community

- Has the current state (baseline) of the environment, economy and social state been addressed?
- Has the future state of your community or site of the project been addressed with the project? And without the project?

- Determining impacts should consider the following:
  - The nature of the predicted impact (adverse, additive, antagonistic, beneficial)
  - Temporal characteristics (duration, rate of change slow vs. fast)
  - Magnitude (size, direction, and spatial extent)
  - Degree of reversibility
  - The likelihood that the predicted impact with actually occur
- Are there other similar projects you could use as references or compare with?
- Is there anyone you could contact to get more information?
- Have your concerns been addressed?
- Is the project going to affect your traditional territory, reserve, or local community?

Common Environmental Concepts

The following section provides information on common environmental terms. Depending on the environmental issues you are dealing with you may or may not come across these terms.

Adaptive Management

Adaptive management promotes action through an experimental approach; making adjustments to management practices and policies as knowledge is gained. Catch phrases used to describe adaptive management are; “learning by doing” or “expect the unexpected, and learn from it”. Incorporating the knowledge gained from past learning experiences into future management plans is an essential component of adaptive management and ultimately the ecosystems approach. Adaptive management follows an iterative process of planning, implementing, observing, evaluating, adjusting, and assessing (Figure 6). Feedback is continuously being evaluated and adjustments are being made to incorporate new information that is gained, this cycle is critical to dealing with uncertainty. Ultimately, the lessons learned and experiences gained through the practice of the adaptive management process needs to be integrated into management strategies and procedures.

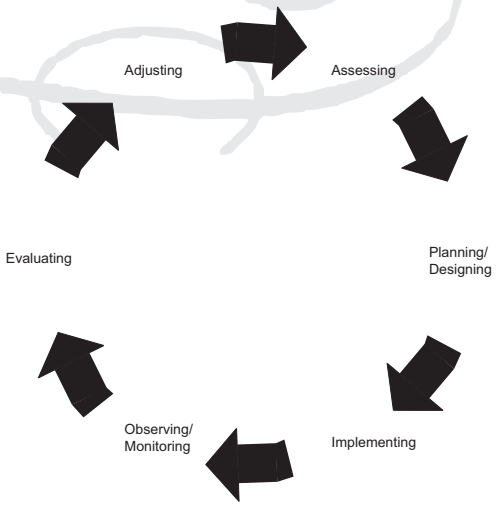


Figure 6:
Adaptive Management
Source: Adapted from ESSA Technologies Ltd.
Website: http://www.essa.com/services/am/index.htm

Many conventional practices attempt to control the environment however; the environment is a complex dynamic system. As a result, uncertainty is unavoidable when dealing with environmental issues. Adaptive Management (AM) an alternative approach (to conventional practices) that incorporates uncertainty.

Additional Information on Adaptive Management:

- Collaborative Adaptive Management Network
  www.adaptivemanagement.net/index.php
- B.C. Government – Adaptive Management Initiatives in the BC Forest Service
  www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/amhome/index.htm

Strategic Environmental Assessment

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is different than an environmental (impact) assessment (EIA or EA). An environment assessment evaluates the impacts of a specific project while an SEA evaluates the impacts of a policy, plan or program. Ideally, a SEA should evaluate the environmental, social and economic considerations of the policy, plan or program.

SEA's are proactive assessments that provide people with a great opportunity to be heard. Early involvement can identify the best options and can influence desirable outcome for all parties.

Basic SEA Framework

- Scoping and baseline determination
- Identify alternatives
- Evaluate and compare alternatives
- Determine the best option

Additional Website Information:

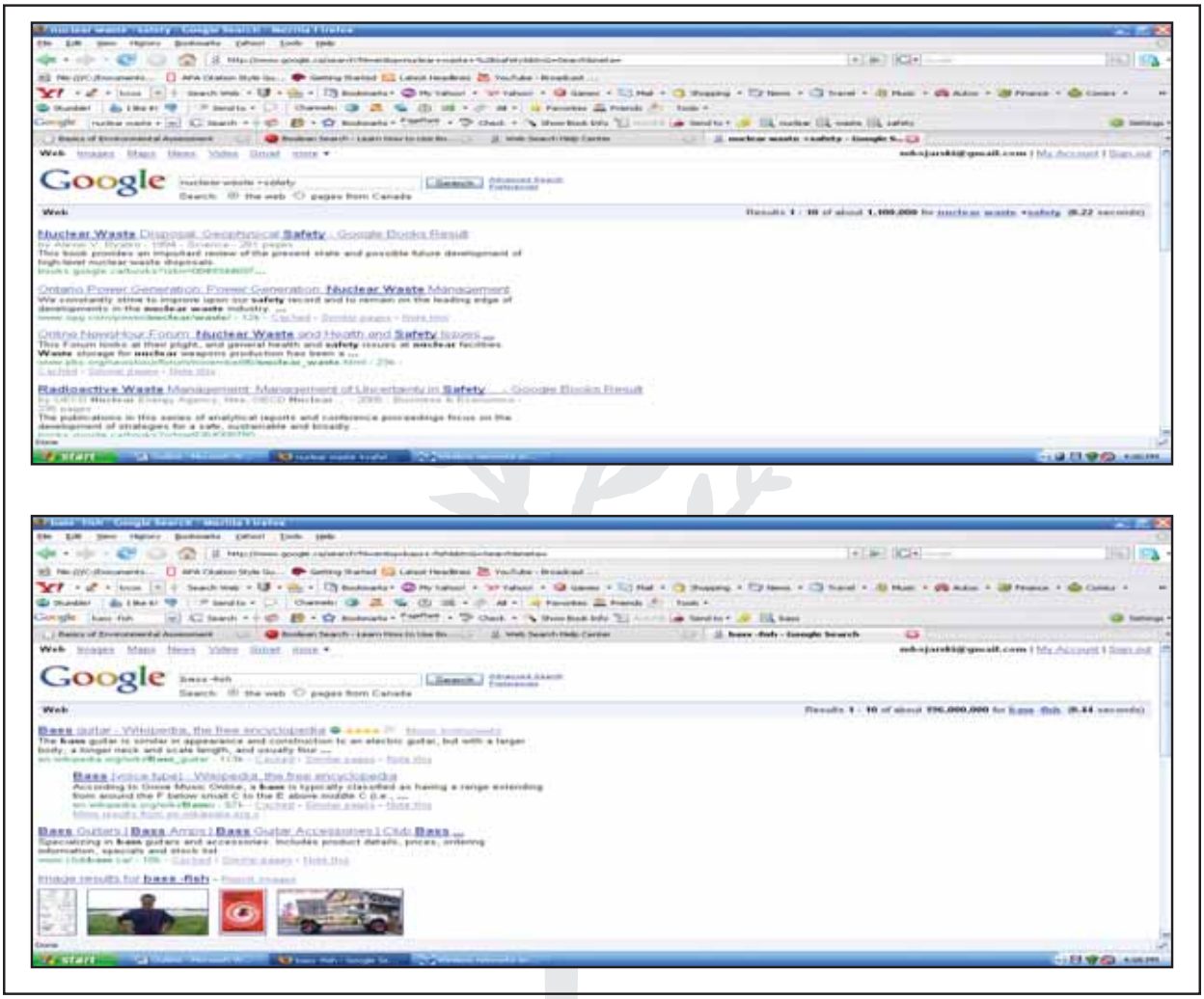
- Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
  www.ceaa.gc.ca
- Canadian International Development Agency
  www.acdi-cida.gc.ca

◆ Appendix A – Internet Researching

Internet Search Tips

Google (www.google.ca) is a common internet search engine that can provide you with information on a particular environmental issue. Using key words and search terms can help to narrow your search and yield relevant information to your topic.

For example: Capital letters do not make a difference in Google searches. To narrow your search, try putting a "+" sign between terms. Like "nuclear waste + safety". If you want to cut out certain terms or words, put a "-" and a space before the word. For example: "bass – fish" to get results on bass the musical instrument, not "bass the fish".



Google also has an application called “Google Scholar” which gives academic journal articles on any particular topic. This can be helpful to see what current research is being done in that area of interest, and it will give you credible results.

As a graduate (or alumni) of a college or university, many schools offer access to their academic databases and journals which can also be used to search for information on a particular environmental issue.

Remember that though Google is currently the most popular search engine, it is not the only one. Try searching for some others, or try looking up Yahoo, Lycos, or Webcrawler. For a listing of different internet search engines visit: www.internettutorials.net/engines.html.

Internet cafés are common in many areas, so if you do not have access personally to a computer, you may have the opportunity to access the internet in other places. The internet is not your only tool to gather information or research. Visit your local library and make use of your librarians, they are there to help. Tell them what you are looking for and see what information is available on the topic. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Most public libraries will also have computers with internet access.

Appendix B – Sample Letter

Example of Specific Letter

Name
Mailing Address

Date

Suzanne Beaver, Councillor
555 Hill Drive
First Nation, AB
T5A 4R7

Attention: Betty Blackfoot

Dear Mrs. Blackfoot,

I am writing about the pending development of the two parcels, totalling 6.15 hectares at 22255 Mulholland Highway, which also fronts Mulholland Drive and Main Street.

I am representing myself, along with many of my neighbours, regarding this property.

Let me make this very clear. We are strongly opposed to any and all of the zoning variances, and/or exceptions to the specific plans that have been filed on this property.

As a community we are very concerned with any zoning changes. We want to see our open spaces and old oak trees preserved, along with the specific plans and general plans of low density housing for this area.

I am specifically asking if Councillor Suzanne Beaver is supporting or opposing the zoning and specific plans exceptions applied for on this property.

I am also specifically asking is if Councillor Suzanne Beaver is supporting or opposing high density development in our neighbourhood.

Many adverse effects that my neighbours and I feel this proposed development presents include the following points:

- The proposed development is high density and does not fit in with the surrounding low density single family and residential estate housing.
- Zoning changes would open the door to apartment development.
- Permanent and negative alteration of the view shed of the surrounding properties.
- The specific and general City plans would be rendered meaningless by this spot zoning.
- Significant increase in already heavy traffic on Mulholland Highway, Mulholland Drive and Main Street.
- Mulholland Scenic Corridor permanent open-space loss.
- Jeopardizes old oak trees on the parcels, some of which have already been chopped down in violation of the law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please reply promptly.

Sincerely,

(Sign your name)
Name

This letter has been also sent to the following:
- Chief Stan Peters

Notes

- **Responsible Authority**

  The federal government department or agency conducting the environmental assessment.

- **Scoping**

  Items that the environmental assessment process should take into consideration.

- **Screening**

  Review of whether or not an environmental assessment is needed for a particular project or under the CEAA, a screening is one of four possible types of environmental assessments conducted under the CEAA.

- **Spatial Boundaries**

  Geographical boundaries, the area the project will considered.

- **Sustainability**

  The idea of balancing biophysical or socio-economic development for future generations.

- **Temporal Boundaries**

  Time frames considered.

- **Threshold**

  Limit, critical point or value (in measurement) of a variable that if exceeded could cause undesirable effects.

- **Treaty Rights**

  Certain rights reserved by signing treaties. Treaties protected rights such as hunting, fishing and gathering in traditional territories as well as education and health, in exchange for land and resources.

- **Valued Ecosystem Component (VEC)**

  Aspects of the environment, both physical and human which are important to the public or from an ecological perspective.

Abbreviations / Acronyms

AM — Adaptive Management

CEAA — Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

CEA — Cumulative Effects Assessment

EA — Environmental Assessment

EIA — Environmental Impact Assessment

EIS — Environmental Impact Statement

NWAC — Native Women's Association of Canada

NWMO — Nuclear Waste Management Organization

ENGO — Environmental Non-Governmental Organization

VEC — Valued Ecosystem Component

Contact Information

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Native Women's Association of Canada

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Ohsweken, ON N0A 1M0
Telephone: (519) 445-0990
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Native Women's Association of Canada

1 Nicholas Street, 9th Floor
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Telephone: (613) 722-3033
Toll-free: 1 (800) 461-4043
Fax: (613) 722-7687

www.nwac.ca

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Finding Your Voice:

Environmental Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

Glossary of Terms

Native Women's Association of Canada

NWMO NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION / SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY *Inspiring Minds*

Glossary of Terms

- **Aboriginal Rights**

  Aboriginal rights are inherent, collective rights of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples from original occupation of lands. These rights are recognized under Section 35 of the Constitution Act of Canada.

- **Aboriginal Title**

  Aboriginal title is a right relating to land which is held communally and cannot be transferred to anyone other than the Crown (government). If an Aboriginal group had occupied land at the time the British acquired sovereignty, and had not abandoned or surrendered the land after that time, it has Aboriginal title to the land.

- **Adaptive Management**

  A management process that uses continuous feedback to guide decision-making.

- **Baseline**

  Information relating to the environment before a project or change.

- **Blog**

  An online form of community communication or "weblog" which allows for public commentary.

- **Comprehensive Study**

  A type of environmental assessment (under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*) that requires rigorous review of a proposed project.

- **Comprehensive Study List Regulation**

  Describes specific projects that are required to undergo a comprehensive study under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

- **Cultural Impacts**

  Changes to one's cultural values, etc., based on decisions such as economic development.

- **Cumulative Effects**

  Two or more environmental affects interacting or combining with each other or the environmental affect over a period of time.

- **Cumulative Effects Assessment**

  Assessing the effects of two or more environmental affects interacting or combining with each other or the environmental affect over a period of time.

- **Effect**

  Induced change.

- **Environmental Assessment**

  The process of determining the potential impacts to an area as a result of a proposed project.

- **Environmental Assessment Report**

  A report detailing the EA. Also see Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

- **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**

  See Environmental Assessment.

- **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

  The physical document presenting the findings of the environmental assessment. Also referred to Environmental Impact Statement.

- **Exclusion List Regulations**

  A list of projects that do not require an environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.*

- **Federal Authority**

  A federal body (example: a department or agency) that may have expertise or a mandate relevant to a project.

- **Impact**

  A biophysical or socio-economic change caused by something.

- **Inclusion List Regulations**

  List of activities that are required to undergo an environmental assessment.

- **Law List Regulations**

  Outlines federal permits or authorizations that would require a Canadian Environmental Assessment to be completed.

- **Mediation**

  A process for resolving disputes that uses a neutral third party to help with communication between the parties disagreeing.

- **Mitigation**

  Reducing or minimizing the environmental effect of a project.

- **Monitoring**

  Measurements of expected changes to the environment as a result of a project or change.

- **Panel Review**

  A group of people appointed by the government to review a proposed project and make recommendations to the Minister of Environment about the future of the project.

- **Project**

  A proposed activity defined as either an undertaking in relation to a physical work or any proposed physical activity that is not a physical work.

- **Proponent**

  The company or organization who owns the proposed project.

- **Public Registry**

  It is an online public record for the purpose of facilitating public access to records relating to environmental assessments.

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Facilitator's Guide

Native Women's Association of Canada

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Acknowledgements

This document is the result of work done by Dalhousie University Master of Resource and Environmental Management students noted below under the supervision of Professor Martin Willison:

- Nikole Andres, Graduate 2009
- Marla Bojarksi, Graduate 2009
- Dee Campbell, Graduate 2010
- Nicole Senyi, Graduate 2009

Published with the guidance and support from:

- Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)
- Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO)

Disclaimer

This Guide is intended to assist a facilitator in planning, delivering, and assessing community sessions on environmental issues. The Guide, in conjunction with the Toolkit, provides direction on how to obtain more information on an issue. It provides additional sources of information on environmental issues. The information presented here is not intended to influence decision making in anyway, nor does it reflect the opinions or recommendations of the authors regarding specific environmental issues. The Guide and Toolkit are meant to provide Aboriginal women with ways to educate themselves and their communities so that informed decision making can take place. The authors emphasize that these documents are meant to be used in their entirety, and not be broken into separate sections.

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What this guide will teach you about facilitating sessions on environmental issues

This guide will assist you in planning, delivering, and assessing community sessions on environmental issues in general. Please feel free to adapt this guide to your community's specific needs.

What is facilitation?

A facilitated session is a highly structured meeting in which the facilitator guides the participants through a series of steps to arrive at a result that is created, understood, and accepted by all of the participants.

A facilitated session creates the right environment, atmosphere, and opportunity for people to contribute in a constructive and positive way.

Facilitation serves the needs of any group who are meeting with a common purpose, whether it be making a decision, solving a problem, or simply exchanging ideas and information.

You can achieve more effective results when solutions are created, understood, and accepted by the people impacted.

What is a facilitator?

- A facilitator is someone who is acceptable to a group, remains neutral, is credible, and has no decision making authority.
- A facilitator assists the group to identify and solve problems and work together as a group to achieve consensus.

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- A facilitator is someone who helps a group of people understand their common objectives and helps the group achieve those objectives without taking a particular position in the discussion.
- The facilitator must be knowledgeable about the subject matter that they are facilitating.

What do you look for in a facilitator?

- Someone who has a proven track record.
- Someone who is able to fulfill the role as described in the next section.
- Someone who can work and think under stress.
- Someone who is an active listener and can paraphrase.
- Someone who is a confident public speaker.
- Someone who can empower, motivate, and mediate.

What are your roles as a facilitator?

Bridge builder – create a safe and open environment for sharing ideas and find similarities in the ideas to build consensus.

Clairvoyant – watch carefully for strain, weariness, lack of engagement.

Guide – know the steps of the process from beginning to end and guide the group through them.

Motivator – start a conversation, establish momentum, and keep the pace going.

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Peacemaker – in the event of conflict you must step in, get things back in order, and direct the group towards resolution.

Praiser – praise for effort, progress, and results. Praise well, often, and specifically. Praise the idea not the person.

Probe – ask for more details on vague input provided.

Questioner – analyze and compare comments and ask questions to manage the discussion.

Task maker – keep the session on track by keeping discussion relevant, prevent detours, and maintain consistent levels of detail from start to finish.

Above all – facilitators care about people, want to help, and put their egos aside.

◆ What principles and values are you committed to

Confidentiality – what you hear is confidential to the group as well as to you.

Inclusion and encouragement – find ways to make sure that everyone is heard and participates.

Listening – listen to what is being said and make sure you repeat what is said. Listen to stories and know when you allow the speaker to continue. Be prepared to hear about the past before you can continue to talk about the present or the future.

Respect – that everyone has a voice and a right to their opinion.

Trust and safety – create an atmosphere of trust and safety among the group to identify and solve problems and work together to achieve consensus.

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Value personal experience – all input is valuable, especially what you hear in stories. Storytelling and oral transmission of traditional knowledge is part of our culture.

◆ How to ask questions

- Put participants in the scenario of the issue being discussed and get them ready to visualize answers.
- How?
- Use words in your questioning such as "think about… imagine that...consider this..." Use "could" verb to maximize the number of ideas "if you could...."
- Examples:
  - Think about everything you could do if....
  - Consider that you could change the outcome if you did....
  - If you could have what you wanted, what might that be....
- Listen actively to what people are saying by summarizing what they have just said.
- Note their comments down by summarizing points on flip chart paper.

◆ Personalities and how to manage them

Adversary – Plays devil's advocate.

What do you do? Acknowledge the person and let them know that all input is valid. Make sure repetitive, irrelevant, and diversionary comments are limited. This may require having a private word with the person. Remind the adversary that everyone's input is valued

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and important for having a well-rounded discussion. Remember, you are not the issue.

Disruptive Participant – Are opinionated, intolerant, and disrespectful.

What do you do? Remind the person that all ideas are welcomed and you are trying to reach a consensus. Remind that the intent is not to have everyone agree with each other, but to hear each other, and come to a common ground. If they continue to be disruptive, you will need to remove them from the group situation. Take a break, take then aside privately, tell them the discussion is over and their participation is no longer needed. Thank them. If they still do not leave, you will need to have discussed this beforehand with the client and know what the community protocol is for security. And remember, you are not the issue.

Experts – Can influence opinions or invite participants to refer to them.

What do you do in this situation? You can ask the expert to assess input at specific stages or remind them that the views of everyone are being sought.

Harmonizer – Smoothes over situations and wants to keep harmony in the group.

What do you do in this situation? Remind everyone that all views are valid and important.

Joker – Provides entertainment.

What do you do in this situation? Keep the joker busy and involved with helping you or the group so that the jokes do not disrupt the conversation flow.

Leader – There are natural spokespeople in a group.

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There are also those who dominate the group.

What do you do in this situation? The facilitator should be aware of the leader and their style.

If the leader works with and represents the group, then that is okay. Let them play that role.

But, if the leader dominates the group, they could influence the group's decision-making process. You might use anonymous voting techniques to allow for safety and privacy.

Quiet and Shy – Those in group that say little and speak softly.

What do you do in this situation? Make sure everyone knows that their contributions are wanted and appreciated. Call on the person by name. Use round-robin discussion tools to ensure everyone has a say without being centred out.

Storytellers – It is understood that people will recount stories to make a point. It is customary to allow those who have a relevant story to share with group to take the opportunity to do so.

What do you do in this situation? You know who the community members are. You know who is likely to participate in this manner. You respect this mode of communication. Actively listen, write down a summary of what is heard. Repeat what you have heard for purposes of clarification. If needed, you should have discussed with the client how they want to handle this situation and you may have to think about planning another session. Be flexible. It might be useful to take notes about story. In what context was the story told, where were you in the agenda? Keep active notes. It

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will be useful in bringing the session back to where you were.

Appropriate interaction with an Elder is to never interrupt when they are speaking. When someone tells a story listen closely to find your answers in the stories and the wisdom of the speaker.

Uninvited – Know why you want people to attend and who they should be. Is it an open meeting or by invitation only?

What do you do in this situation? If it is an open meeting, then everyone is invited. If it is by invitation only, then you can remind the participants that you have prepared specifically for this one group and you might want to offer another session for another group. This could be flagged in the pre-planning stage of preparation.

◆ Challenges and how to deal with them

Energy levels too low – Energy levels drop.

What do you do in this situation? Change the activity or take a break. Play an icebreaker game (see tools).

Energy levels too high – Too much energy in the group.

What do you do in this situation? Give participants a highly active task to complete such as presentations, split up into various groups, ask for a recorder and a presenter to focus the group on the activity.

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Facing a workshop situation different from what you had expected – You expect participants to have seen documents beforehand or have completed preliminary tasks, there are unexpected participants, participants were expecting something different, timing may not have been understood, information may have been covered in another forum.

What do you do in this situation? Briefly recap, welcome participants and ask questions to determine how they may be able to contribute to the discussion and what they know, clarify expectations and adjust accordingly; and only as a last resort, revise or cancel workshop.

Hijack – Someone wants to change the workshop.

What do you do in this situation? Stick to the planned structure and reassure participants that everyone will have their say. If the hijacker wants new topics, briefly discuss with group and have a vote (public or secret) on adding the topics.

Opposition to the session being held – There may be people who do not want the session to be held, people may feel they have something to lose, participants are in conflict with each other.

What do you do in this situation? It would be useful to know beforehand if these are situations that you should be prepared for. You have to work with your local representatives in order to prepare.

If you know that this is a situation you could be facing ask for ground rules to be set right at the beginning of the meeting. Interact with those who do not want the session held so that they see you are interested in what they have to say and are open to working on their issues.

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Allow people to assign their own seats. Pay attention to reactions. Move issues to a stand still to come back to later on if necessary, or plan another session to deal with those particular issues. Move agenda on and hold informal session during breaks to recap what your understanding is of the issues. Plan a follow-up and communicate this openly. Know what your client will support to resolve this. Lastly remember that you are not the issue.

Running over time – Time is running out.

What do you do in this situation? Stop the activity. Remind the group that they are running over time. Promise to return to issue later or negotiate to curtail another section and an agreeable amount of time to go over.

◆ Tools and techniques in facilitation

- Ask to discuss side topics after meeting – move to ... the 'parking lot'.
- Focus on the solution, not the problem.
- Look for positives.
- Never try to 'one up' a participant. Remain neutral.
- Play games to break the ice, change energy levels, ... build comfort level and cohesion amongst those in ... group.
- Recognize people by listening attentively, repeat what you think you have heard, summarize what you have heard.
- Acknowledge dissent and verbalize that all participation is valid.
- Remain neutral and non-judgemental.

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- Remind participants of time.
- Respect participants' refusal to participate.
- Set calm and respectful tone.
- Solicit solutions from parties.
- Gain consensus through majority rule, brainstorming, prioritizing, etc.
- Use a suggestion box and go to it from time to time.
- Remember, you may not have the whole picture.
- Remember that you are not the issue.

◆ Designing the facilitation process

- **Purpose** – Why is this session being held?
- **Product** – What is the product that you want at the end and how will you know you have it?
- **Participants** – Who needs to be involved and what are their perspectives?
- **Probable issues** – What are the concerns that will likely arise?
- **Process** – What steps need to be taken to achieve the purpose, get the product, given the participants and the probable issues that may arise?

◆ Questions you need to ask the client before facilitation takes place

- Who are your participants?
- Is there a good reason for each participant to attend?

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- Do you know what you expect each participant to contribute?
- Do you know what the perspectives of participants may be?
- Do you know what you want the participants to go ... away with?
- Is there a protocol for inviting participants?
- In First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, consider whether you need to go through the local leadership. How do you notify the leadership? How do you notify participants? This can include by invitation, community or local newsletter, door to door canvassing, posters, word of mouth, incentives, or reminders.
- Is there a need for translation services?
- Are you having an opening ceremony/prayer – what is the protocol for this?
- Are there dynamics at play in the community that you need to be aware of? Examples: Family disagreements, recent elections, perceptions of fear, intimidation, repercussions for voicing opinions, etc.
- If so, how do they recommend you deal with those ... dynamics?
- Do you know what will happen with the information .. from the workshop?
- Will there be any decisions that need to be made and how will they be made?
- Do you know what the expected outcomes are? (Examples: Workplans, decisions, solutions, strategies, next steps, etc.)

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- Do you understand the subject under discussion? If not, what do you need to know?
- Are the participants well-informed about the subject under discussion? If not, what do you need to do?
- Do you have the right equipment?
- Do you know how to handle actions coming out of ... the discussions?
- Is there a written report or input provided in sessions expected?
- Will the facilitator need to present findings in the ..... workshop?
- Are evaluations on sessions being provided? If so, ... ask to see a copy.

◆ Worksheet – Pre-planning

- Objective of session
- Participants
- Opening ceremony/prayer – who and how do you invite, what are the requirements?
- How do you invite participants? (Examples: Advertise in community newsletter or on community radio/ television, posters, flyers in mailboxes, door to door, text messages, etc.)
- Is there internet access in the community? (Examples: High speed, dial-up, satellite)
- Do you need translation services and for whom?
- Challenges expected? (Examples: understanding issues might come up and from whom)

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- What is the room layout? (Examples: theatre, round tables, information displays, etc.)
- How is the agenda organized? (Examples: lecture, ... discussion groups, breakout sessions, etc.)
- What tools do you need?
  - Flip chart
  - Laptop computer
  - Name tags
  - Fact Sheets
  - Other
- How will you start the meeting? (Examples: ..... introductions, opening ceremony/prayer, ground rules, etc.)
- How will you get participation? (Examples: volunteer, . round table, etc.)
- How will you stay on track?
- How will you gain consensus?
- How will you keep the meeting moving?
- Will you use games – what are they? (Examples: ice . breakers, energy boosters, etc.)
- How will you close the meeting? (Examples: wrap up, next steps, closing ceremony/prayer)
- How will you evaluate? (Examples: exit surveys, etc.)
- Will you provide additional opportunities for input? .... (Examples: website, fax, or letter)
- How do you share the materials? (Examples: paper .. copies, CDs, flash drives)

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Checklist for Planning Session

Work Plan Item:	Comments:	✔
Location		
Participants (know who and invite, addresses, e-mails, phone numbers)		
Does any participant require transportation?		
Reminder notices three days before session – text message, door to door, flyers in mailboxes		
Is there a local radio or TV station or community newspaper? – Advertise meeting		
Meeting with client		
Ask protocol for inviting Elder (invite) – protocol for offering		
Ask client if you need translation services		

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Work Plan Item:	Comments:	✔
Ask client what the dress is – should be respectful and appropriate		
Check equipment beforehand		
Pens		
Paper		
Flipchart with extra paper (and stand)		
Whiteboard with special markers and eraser		
Tape		
Markers		
Sticky notes		
Overhead projector		
Computer (cables, cords)		
Screen		

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Work Plan Item:	Comments:	✔
Laser printer		
Water glasses, water		
Extension Cords		
Name cards or badges		
Watch or clock		
Room set-up – tables, chairs. Know where emergency exits are		
Small break out areas		
Arrange for messages to be brought to your attention		
Food and drink set-up		
Clean up room afterward		

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Checklist for Session Day

Items:	Comments:	✔
Text message reminders if possible		
Ensure requirements for opening ceremony/ prayer are in place		
Test projector		
Test computer and PowerPoint presentations		
Check screen		
Set up equipment for easy reach and use		
Lay out handouts, pens, tape, etc.		
Have translation services in place		
Be ready 30 minutes before people arrive		
Have evaluations ready		

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Basic rules

- People need to know what is coming next.
- People's needs (Example: washroom break) could interfere with individual concentration levels.
- Try to change up the activity every 15 minutes, that way some individuals may concentrate on the discussion at hand and participate better.
- Start with the simple and move to more complex.
- Start with the simple and break it down into parts.
- Start with the safe and move to the risky.
- Use anonymous voting techniques to protect people.

How to organize your day

- Welcome and introduction.
- Start with Opening Ceremony/Prayer (where appropriate).
- Welcome everyone. Introduce yourself and tell people where you are from. Explain who you are facilitating this session for. Briefly explain your role. Ask if anyone needs translation services. Set up if needed.
- Ask if everyone can hear you.
- Explain the workshop purpose.
- Describe structure and timing, where breaks are, and where to get coffee and lunch.
- Tell people where the bathrooms are.
- Explain fire/safety procedures.
- State purpose of the meeting, results expected.

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- Explain style of workshop and help group set ground rules.

  Ground rules include:

  - Agree to listen, understand, respect, be truthful.
  - Agree how you will reach decisions.
  - No cell phones.
  - No wandering in and out of room.
  - If necessary, arrange child care.

  - Be clear that there may be different views on a matter. There may be things that you hear and do not agree with. Respect other opinion and views, listen, and then share your view.

    - If participants do not have access to correct information, it will be provided as soon as possible.

- Explain how you will answer questions.
- Explain who will record.
- Get participants to introduce themselves.
- Provide a visual agenda.
- Ask participants to accept agenda.
- Set up a “parking lot” to keep track of digressions – these could include inappropriate, conflict inducing, or disruptive input, items not on the agenda but you do not want to lose sight of them
- Conduct a warm up activity (Example: ice breaker activity or opener).

  - Ask each participant to write three three things about themselves that others do not know and see if you can guess who wrote what.

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- Ask each participant to recall the most memorable experience of their lives.
- Have an image on the screen when people are arriving. Switch to another screen and then ask people what the image was. See how many can guess.

◆ Ground rules with client

- Agree on what to do if there are abusive or disruptive participants. What will the community accept?
- Know beforehand if there are any people who do not want the session held.
- Are there people who might try to intimidate others from speaking?
- Are people afraid they have something to lose if they speak out?
- Are people in conflict with each other?
- Do you need security?

Develop a protocol for dealing with the above and be prepared.

- Set ground rules such as:
  - Looking for general information.
  - Set boundaries for discussion.
  - Information shared will be kept confidential.
  - Be prepared to interrupt if the boundary is crossed.

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Staying on Track

- Remind people of purpose and objective and of time constraints.
- Visibly write up decisions.
- Summarize before reading or evaluating.
- Ask for closure.

Closing the meeting

- Review the activities performed, the objectives, issues, decisions, progress, and actions.
- Evaluate the value of the sessions and the results acheived. (Evaluation form in handouts—you will need to make copies).
- Make a list of plans/what was decided/who is responsible and when to follow-up.
- End by reminding everyone of next steps.
- Closing the meeting with a ceremony/prayer (where appropriate).
- Formally end the session.
- Debrief with sponsor to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

How to make the workshop meaningful

- Identify and explain next steps for participants.
- Participants, sponsors, and other parties must get a copy of the workshop report.

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- Report the following:
  - what was covered
  - structure of the discussion
  - how it went
  - timing
  - ideas generated
  - evaluations generated
  - diagrams created
  - voting results
  - decisions made
  - actions arising
  - issues arising
- Follow through on any promises made.

How the facilitator can bring a group together around an issue

- The facilitator should understand what issues are ..... important to this community.
- Understand that the group may have a history with ... this issue. What has been their experience with this .. issue?
- Examine where the group is now with the issue.
- Assess what each member of the group brings to the issue.
- What is the current situation for forming this group (favourable/not)?

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- What are the opportunities/obstacles/barriers that would help/hinder the process from reaching its full potential?
- Ask where the group is heading, what is their vision?
- What are their goals?
  - Goals are simple, broad statements on what a group can achieve and are do-able, considering available resources (people, skills, time)
- What brought them all together?
  - Record answers
  - Look for common themes
- What are their objectives?
  - Objectives are statements about how to acheive a goal.

Other considerations

- Consider checklists for numerous sessions.
- Be prepared in the event that you do not finish the agenda in one session.
- Have a number of games planned.
- Take copies of what an Environmental Impact Statement looks like.
- Research topic. Provide brief notes on materials.

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NWAC Mandate

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies. NWAC is an aggregate of Native women's organizations from across Canada and was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1974. Much like a "Grandmother's Lodge", we as aunties, mothers, sisters, brothers and relatives collectively recognize, respect, promote, defend and enhance our Native ancestral laws, spiritual beliefs, language and traditions given to us by the Creator.

Native Women's Association of Canada

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