

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

2015–16

Report on Plans and Priorities

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment and Minister
Responsible for the Canadian Environmental
Assessment Agency

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Catalogue No. En104-11/2015E-PDF

ISSN: 2292-3721

This document has been issued in French under the title: *Agence canadienne d'évaluation environnementale : Rapport sur les plans et les priorités 2015–16.*

Alternative formats may be requested by contacting: info@ceaa-acee.gc.ca.

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Minister's Message

As Minister responsible for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, I am pleased to present the 2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities.

The Agency's governing legislation, the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* (CEAA 2012), and its associated regulations, were designed to protect our environment while building a strong economy.

Under CEAA 2012, the Agency supports this goal by ensuring that major natural resource projects, which create jobs and opportunity, are carried out in an environmentally responsible manner.

Delivering high-quality environmental assessments of major projects in a timely and predictable manner that effectively incorporates public participation and Aboriginal consultation is a key responsibility for the Agency. High-quality environmental assessments inform ministerial decision statements and identify mitigation and follow-up program conditions that are clear, measurable and enforceable.

I invite parliamentarians and Canadians to read the 2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities to learn more about the Agency's priorities and its role.



The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment
and Minister Responsible for the Canadian Environmental
Assessment Agency

Institutional Head's Message

I am pleased to submit this Report on Plans and Priorities, outlining how the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency plans to meet its priorities in the 2015–16 reporting period.

This report identifies the Agency's key priorities in delivering its mandate, in support of the Government of Canada's plan for Responsible Resource Development. The Agency will continue to deliver high-quality environmental assessments of major resource projects in a timely and predictable manner. It will also continue to integrate Aboriginal consultation activities into the environmental assessment process to the extent possible, while building effective relationships with Aboriginal peoples and encouraging their participation.



Implementing the requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* (CEAA 2012) and its associated regulations remains at the top of our agenda. For example, in delivering high-quality environmental assessments, the Agency will continue to focus on supporting the Minister of the Environment in her decision-making capacity under CEAA 2012, including the issuance of decision statements that establish mitigation measures, follow-up program requirements, and clear, measurable, and enforceable conditions. The Agency will also focus on the ongoing development and implementation of its compliance and enforcement program to promote and verify compliance with decision statements and legislative requirements.

As an organization committed to continual improvement and management excellence, the Agency will also continue efforts aimed at modernizing its business and information management practices, strengthening leadership capacity, and continuing high employee engagement.

Ron Hallman
President
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

Section I: Organizational Expenditure Overview

Organizational Profile

Appropriate Minister: The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P., Minister of the Environment

Institutional Head: Ron Hallman, President

Ministerial Portfolio: Environment

Enabling Instrument(s): *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*ⁱ

Year of Incorporation / Commencement: 1994

Other: The *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* is supported by three regulations: the *Regulations Designating Physical Activities*; the *Prescribed Information for the Description of a Designated Project Regulations*; and the *Cost Recovery Regulations*. The Agency is also the Federal Administrator under the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* and the *Northeastern Quebec Agreement*.

Organizational Context

Raison d’être

Environmental assessment (EA) contributes to informed decision making in support of sustainable development.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) delivers high-quality EAs in support of government decisions about major projects.

Responsibilities

EA informs government decision-making and supports sustainable development by identifying opportunities to avoid, eliminate or reduce a project’s potential adverse impact on the environment before the project is undertaken, and by ensuring that mitigation measures are applied when the project is constructed, operated and decommissioned.

The *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* (CEAA 2012) and its accompanying regulations provide the legislative framework for federal EA. EAs consider whether “designated projects” are likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects that fall within the legislative authority of Parliament or result from a federal decision about the project.

Assessments are conducted by one of three responsible authorities: the Agency, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission for projects that it regulates or the National Energy Board for projects that it regulates. CEAA 2012 requires that opportunities for public participation be provided during EAs and that participant funding and a public registry, including an Internet site, be established. CEAA 2012 also defines the roles and responsibilities of the Agency, the other responsible authorities, decision-makers, and project proponents.

When the Agency is the responsible authority, it determines whether an EA is required for a designated project and conducts or manages the EA in accordance with the procedures and timelines set out in CEAA 2012. The Agency is also responsible for managing the EAs of most projects that continue to be assessed under the former *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, in accordance with the transitional provisions of CEAA 2012.

The Agency advises the Minister of the Environment in fulfilling her responsibilities under CEAA 2012, including establishing review panels to conduct EAs of certain projects and issuing enforceable EA decision statements at the conclusion of the EA process.

In support of timely and efficient EAs, the Agency coordinates the delivery of federal EA requirements with provinces and territories to avoid duplication, and advises the Minister of the Environment on requests to substitute the CEAA 2012 process with the EA process of another jurisdiction. Additionally, the Agency—on its own and in collaboration with partners—conducts

research to support high-quality EAs and develops effective EA policies and practices. For designated projects for which it is the responsible authority, the Agency promotes compliance with CEAA 2012, and will take action as required to ensure proponents comply with the legislation's requirements.

The Government of Canada takes a whole-of-government approach to Aboriginal consultation in the context of EAs, to ensure that Aboriginal groups are adequately consulted and, where appropriate, accommodated when the Crown (federal government) contemplates actions that may adversely impact potential or established Aboriginal or treaty rights. The Agency serves as the Crown consultation coordinator to integrate the Government of Canada's Aboriginal consultation activities into the EA process to the extent possible, for review panels and for EAs for which the Agency is responsible.

The Agency leads federal project review activities under the environmental and social protection regimes set out in sections 22 and 23 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA) and in the *Northeastern Quebec Agreement* (NEQA). The JBNQA and the NEQA are constitutionally protected comprehensive land claim agreements. The Agency supports its President who, as the federal administrator, must review and determine whether projects of a federal nature proposed under the JBNQA or NEQA should proceed and, if so, under which conditions.

The *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals* establishes a self-assessment process for departments and agencies to conduct a strategic environmental assessment of a policy, plan or program proposal. The Agency supports the Minister of the Environment in promoting the application of the Directive, and provides federal authorities with guidance and advice upon request.

The Agency was established in 1994, and is headed by a President who reports to the Minister of the Environment. The Agency has its headquarters in Ottawa, with regional offices in Halifax, Quebec City, Toronto, Edmonton, and Vancouver.

Strategic Outcomes and Program Alignment Architecture

1. Strategic Outcome: High-quality and timely environmental assessments of major projects to protect the environment and support economic growth

1.1 Program: Environmental Assessment Policy

1.2 Program: Environmental Assessment Delivery

Internal Services

Organizational Priorities

Organizational Priorities

Priority	Type ¹	Strategic Outcome(s) and/or Program(s)
Deliver high-quality environmental assessments of major projects	Ongoing	Environmental Assessment Policy Program Environmental Assessment Delivery Program
Description		
<p>Why is this a priority?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High-quality EAs provide a thorough consideration of the environmental effects of a designated project and identify measures to mitigate adverse effects. EAs are informed by public participation and consultation with Aboriginal groups, are completed in a timely manner, and provide the information necessary to enable decision-making. Through a Minister's decision statement, the EA process can—where necessary—lead to clear, measurable, and enforceable conditions, including mitigation measures and follow-up program requirements. This will lead to the strengthening of environmental protection, an initiative under the government's plan for Responsible Resource Development.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> To ensure timeliness and predictability, CEAA 2012 establishes timelines for the Agency to: determine the adequacy of the project description; determine whether an EA of a designated project is required; and complete the EA.</p> <p>What are the plans for meeting this priority?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Implement approaches and, as needed, integrate lessons learned into the process of conducting EAs, to ensure optimal effectiveness and efficiency. <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain and implement operational policies, procedures, and service standards to support quality, consistency, and predictability in federal EAs. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure employees are provided with knowledge, guidance, and training instruments that support compliance with CEAA 2012 and the delivery of high-quality EAs. <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate Aboriginal consultation activities into the EA process to the extent possible. <input type="checkbox"/> Improve access to information about CEAA 2012 and project EA to the public and stakeholders, for increased transparency. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for the public and Aboriginal groups to participate in the EA process in meaningful ways. <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate public involvement in project EAs through the establishment and delivery of a Participant Funding Program. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide management support to staff members. <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperate with other jurisdictions, including provinces. 		

1. Type is defined as follows: **previously committed to**—committed to in the first or second fiscal year prior to the subject year of the report; **ongoing**—committed to at least three fiscal years prior to the subject year of the report; and **new**—newly committed to in the reporting year of the RPP or DPR.

- ☐ Promote compliance with CEAA 2012.
- ☐ Verify compliance with the Minister of the Environment's EA decision statements.

Priority	Type ²	Strategic Outcome(s) and/or Program(s)
Build effective relationships with Aboriginal peoples	Ongoing	Environmental Assessment Policy Program Environmental Assessment Delivery Program
Description		
<p>Why is this a priority?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CEAA 2012 includes provisions specific to the interests of Aboriginal peoples, such as the consideration of changes to the environment caused by a designated project that may have an impact on their current use of lands and resources. Additionally, the Agency integrates consideration of impacts on established or potential Aboriginal and treaty rights into the EA process and identifies mitigation measures for inclusion in decision statements as potential means for addressing concerns raised. It also participates in the negotiation and implementation of the EA components of land claim agreements and self-government arrangements. Building relationships with Aboriginal peoples that encourage and facilitate their active participation in these activities is essential for the successful delivery of these Agency responsibilities.</p> <p>What are the plans for meeting this priority?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a strategic outreach and engagement plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate consultation on potential impacts of designated projects on established or potential Aboriginal and treaty rights into the EA process to the extent possible, and identify mitigation measures to address concerns. <input type="checkbox"/> Pursue outreach activities with Aboriginal peoples to provide information on the conduct of federal EAs and associated consultation activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Through the Participant Funding Program, effectively and efficiently make funds available to support Aboriginal groups' participation in the EA process and associated Aboriginal consultation activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute, as appropriate, to Government of Canada approaches to enhancing relationships with Aboriginal groups and earlier engagement of Aboriginal groups on their issues and interests in areas of intensive resource activity. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide external training and guidance to promote early engagement with Aboriginal peoples and adequate consultation during the EA. 		

2. Type is defined as follows: **previously committed to**—committed to in the first or second fiscal year prior to the subject year of the report; **ongoing**—committed to at least three fiscal years prior to the subject year of the report; and **new**—newly committed to in the reporting year of the RPP or DPR.

- ☐ Improve its suite of operational policy instruments based on lessons learned, and prepare materials that clarify CEAA 2012 decision-making processes for Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public.
- ☐ Provide management support to staff members undertaking Aboriginal consultation.
- ☐ Comply with its obligations established under the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* and the *Northeastern Quebec Agreement*, and act as federal administrator for these two agreements.

Priority	Type ³	Strategic Outcome(s) and/or Program(s)
Play a lead role in shaping the future of federal EA	Ongoing	Environmental Assessment Policy Program Environmental Assessment Delivery Program
Description		
<p>Why is this a priority?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> To remain effective and support sound decisions, the EA system must be responsive to Canada's evolving economic, technological, social, and physical environments. To this end, the Agency strives to ensure that the federal EA framework meets the needs of Canadians, and that it meets the goals of Responsible Resource Development.</p> <p>What are the plans for meeting this priority?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Track and analyse emerging issues and trends in EA, and integrate effective innovations into policy development. <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct research to keep apprised of and develop modern approaches for federal EA. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure policy direction is clear, and policy instruments reflect lessons learned from the implementation of CEAA 2012 and feedback received from the public, Aboriginal peoples, and other stakeholders. <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperate with the U.S. and other international authorities to promote effective EAs for projects likely to have transboundary effects. <input type="checkbox"/> Offer training and provide guidance and advice to strengthen strategic environmental assessment. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop an approach for implementing the regional studies provision of CEAA 2012, to improve consideration of cumulative effects in a regional context. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop the policy framework to support the development of robust decision statements, the 		

3. Type is defined as follows: **previously committed to**—committed to in the first or second fiscal year prior to the subject year of the report; **ongoing**—committed to at least three fiscal years prior to the subject year of the report; and **new**—newly committed to in the reporting year of the RPP or DPR.

conduct of follow-up programs, and the Compliance and Enforcement Program.

- Meet commitments to Government of Canada initiatives such as the Red Tape Reduction Action Plan and the Major Projects Management Office, and engage with the Community of Federal Regulators.

Risk Analysis

Key Risks

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to Program Alignment Architecture
<p>The Agency operates in a continuously changing environment impacted by outside factors, such as the level of economic activity, which affects the type, timing, volume, and distribution of projects requiring EAs.</p>	<p>The Agency maintains proactive relationships with stakeholders, to forecast and plan its work to the extent possible.</p> <p>Efficient and effective implementation of CEAA 2012 and associated regulations is providing certainty and efficiency in the EA process.</p> <p>This is an ongoing risk that requires the Agency to ensure that resources are available where and when required.</p>	<p>Environmental Assessment Delivery Program</p>
<p>Shared federal and provincial responsibility for environmental management leads to risks of duplication between federal and provincial EA processes.</p>	<p>This is an ongoing risk, as environmental management is an area of shared responsibility between the federal and provincial governments under the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i>. As a result, some projects may require both a federal and a provincial EA.</p> <p>The Agency seeks opportunities with provinces to reduce duplication in project-specific EAs.</p>	<p>Environmental Assessment Policy Program</p> <p>Environmental Assessment Delivery Program</p>

	Cooperative mechanisms such as the substitution and equivalency provisions of CEAA 2012 can be applied to reduce this risk.	
The Agency manages Aboriginal consultation activities with potentially affected Aboriginal groups during the EAs of designated projects for which it is responsible, in order to fulfill the federal Crown's legal duty to consult. A lack of adequate consultation makes it difficult to ensure appropriate accommodation can be identified and implemented. A lack of adequate consultation may also be a source of regulatory uncertainty.	<p>The Agency integrates Aboriginal consultation activities into the EA process to the extent possible, and identifies measures that can be included in a decision statement to address concerns, thereby enabling the federal Crown to meet its legal duty to consult for the government actions associated with a project, and for the Minister of the Environment to make an EA decision.</p> <p>This is an ongoing risk, because each EA gives rise to the legal duty to consult.</p> <p>The Aboriginal component of the Participant Funding Program provides up to \$4.469 million in financial assistance specifically to Aboriginal groups, to prepare for, and participate in, consultation activities and opportunities associated with EAs undertaken by the Agency, or by review panels.</p>	<p>Environmental Assessment Policy Program</p> <p>Environmental Assessment Delivery Program</p>
Proponent noncompliance with CEAA 2012, including conditions identified in decision statements, is prohibited, and undermines the objectives of public confidence in the legislation and the Agency.	<p>Decision statements contain clear and measurable conditions, ensuring that effects on matters of federal jurisdiction are either not significant or, appropriately justified by the Governor in Council.</p> <p>The Agency's compliance and enforcement program sets out an</p>	<p>Environmental Assessment Policy Program</p> <p>Environmental Assessment Delivery Program</p>

	approach to verifying compliance and an appropriate response to situations where compliance is not met.	
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Protecting the environment, while supporting strong economic growth and improving the quality of life of Canadians, is a priority of the Government of Canada. EA, including strategic environmental assessment, supports this priority by ensuring that environmental effects are considered before decisions are made to allow policies, plans, programs, or projects to proceed.

The Agency operates in a continuously changing environment impacted by outside factors, including the economy, which can significantly impact the type, timing, volume, and distribution of projects subject to EA. Accurately forecasting where and when resources will be most needed is an operational challenge.

CEAA 2012 includes provisions for a range of approaches in support of the goal of “one project, one review”, within a defined time period, including cooperative EAs, delegation, substitution, and equivalency. When the Government of Canada and a provincial government both require EAs, the Agency works with that province, to the extent possible, to design and deliver a single, effective, and efficient EA process that addresses the requirements of both jurisdictions.

The federal Crown has a legal duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Aboriginal groups when it contemplates conduct that may adversely affect potential or established Aboriginal or treaty rights. The Agency integrates Aboriginal consultation considerations into all EAs it conducts, and EAs conducted by review panels. As Crown consultation coordinator, the Agency initiates early engagement with Aboriginal groups, develops consultation plans, coordinates consultation activities, considers and responds to issues raised by Aboriginal groups with respect to current use of lands and resources and Aboriginal and treaty rights, and summarizes the outcomes of consultations for decision-makers—particularly for the Minister of the Environment. For substituted EAs, procedural aspects of Aboriginal consultation are delegated to the province. The Government of Canada remains responsible for ensuring that potentially impacted Aboriginal groups are adequately consulted and, where appropriate, accommodated. Upon issuance of an EA decision statement by the Minister of the Environment which includes measures to address concerns raised during the EA, the responsibility to fulfill any consultation obligations rests with the federal departments and agencies that have regulatory responsibilities for the project.

CEAA 2012 provides the Agency with the framework required to ensure an efficient and effective EA process, by establishing clear timelines and providing the means to ensure

compliance with the Minister of the Environment’s EA decision statements. The Agency has put in place the necessary measures to implement the EA process elements of CEAA 2012, will build on this work to promote and verify compliance, and will further enhance its Compliance and Enforcement Program based on lessons learned.

Planned Expenditures

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
17,351,870	17,351,870	17,191,631	17,191,631

Human Resources (Full-time equivalents [FTEs])

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
158	157	157

Budgetary Planning Summary for Strategic Outcome(s) and Program(s) (dollars)

Strategic Outcome(s), Program(s) and Internal Services	2012–13 Expenditures	2013–14 Expenditures	2014–15 Forecast Spending	2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
Strategic Outcome: High-quality and timely environmental assessments of major projects to protect the environment and support economic growth							
Environmental Assessment Policy Program	3,045,780	4,351,344	4,668,868	3,117,153	3,117,153	3,116,066	3,116,066
Environmental Assessment Delivery Program	15,029,356	18,016,837	14,986,397	9,476,761	9,476,761	9,326,182	9,326,182
Subtotal	18,075,136	22,368,181	19,655,265	12,593,914	12,593,914	12,442,248	12,442,248
Internal Services Subtotal	9,873,689	10,260,299	10,913,828	4,757,956	4,757,956	4,749,383	4,749,383
Total	27,948,825	32,628,480	30,569,093	17,351,870	17,351,870	17,191,631	17,191,631

The figures for the Environmental Assessment Delivery Program listed in the table above do not include the cost-recoverable expenditures. The Agency has the authority to cost-recover up to \$8 million annually, which is netted against the voted authority.

The expenditures indicated for 2012–13 and 2013–14 represent the actual expenditures as reported in the 2013 and 2014 Public Accounts, respectively. For fiscal year 2014–15, the forecast spending represents the Agency's planned budgetary and statutory expenditures. The Agency forecasts a \$2-million decrease in spending in 2014–15 as compared to 2013–14, due mainly to an anticipated \$1.9-million decrease in cost-recoverable activities.

For the period between 2015–16 and 2017–18, the planned spending reflects funding approved by the Treasury Board to support the Agency's strategic outcome.

Planned spending in 2015–16 is forecasted to decrease in comparison with 2014–15, by \$13.8 million. This decrease is mainly attributable to the sunseting funds for Major Projects Management Office and Aboriginal consultation. These sunseting programs are subject to government decisions as part of the budget process. Outcomes of such decisions would be reflected in the Agency's future budget exercises and Estimates documents.

The human resources required to sustain an average level of employment over 12 months are based on a 37.5-hour work week. One FTE equals one person working full-time on a 37.5-hour

work week for the year, or any number of part-time employees whose combined hours of work equal one FTE. The Agency plans to use 158 FTEs in 2015–16 (243 FTEs were planned in 2014–15).

Alignment of Spending With the Whole-of-Government Framework

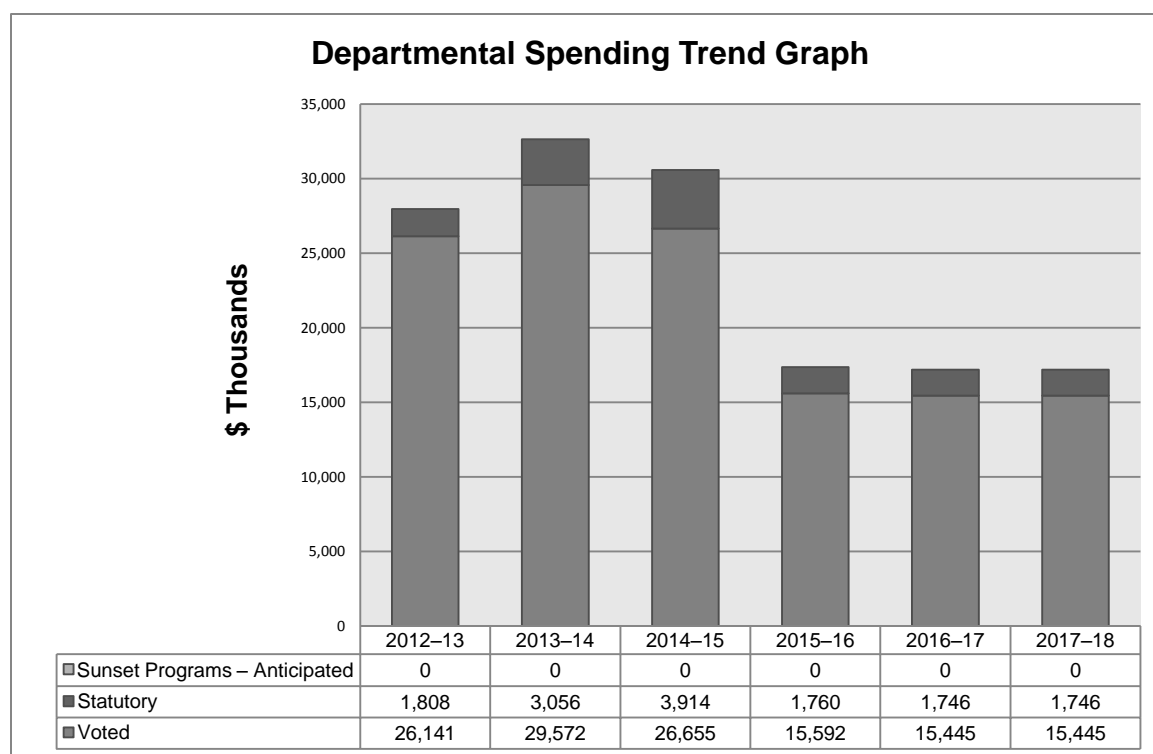
Alignment of 2015–16 Planned Spending With the [Whole-of-Government Framework](#)ⁱⁱ (dollars)

Strategic Outcome	Program	Spending Area	Government of Canada Outcome	2015–16 Planned Spending
1 High-quality and timely environmental assessments of major projects to protect the environment and support economic growth	1.1 Environmental Assessment Policy	Economic Affairs	Strong Economic Growth	3,117,153
	1.2 Environmental Assessment Delivery	Economic Affairs	Strong Economic Growth	9,476,761

Total Planned Spending by Spending Area (dollars)

Spending Area	Total Planned Spending
Economic Affairs	12,593,914
Social Affairs	0
International Affairs	0
Government Affairs	0

Departmental Spending Trend



The Agency's forecasted spending for 2014–15 is expected to be \$30.6 million, a decrease of \$2 million (7.1 percent) from 2013–14 actual spending. This is mainly attributable to an anticipated \$1.9-million decrease in anticipated cost-recoverable activities.

The net decrease of \$13.2 million (shown above in the Departmental Spending Trend Graph) between 2014–15 and 2015–16 spending is mainly attributable to the sunseting of funds. These sunseting programs are subject to government budget decisions. Outcomes of such decisions would be reflected in the Agency's future budget exercises and Estimates documents.

The analysis in the Budgetary Planning Summary section of this report includes a more detailed explanation on variances.

Estimates by Vote

For information on the Agency's organizational appropriations, consult the [2015–16 Main Estimates on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat website](#)ⁱⁱⁱ.

Section II: Analysis of Programs by Strategic Outcome

Strategic Outcome: High-quality and timely environmental assessments of major projects to protect the environment and support economic growth.

Program 1.1: Environmental Assessment Policy

Description

The Environmental Assessment Policy program develops and promotes robust policies and practices for high-quality environmental assessment (EA) in accordance with the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*. This is achieved by building and reinforcing policies, procedures, and criteria for the conduct of federal EA, by promoting cooperation and coordinated action between the federal government and other jurisdictions, by promoting communication and cooperation with Aboriginal peoples, and by developing instruments and training for EA practitioners. EA Policy enables continuous improvement through research, monitoring, analysis, and advice. Recommendations inform the development of new regulatory and policy approaches, as well as the revision of guidance, training and knowledge-based instruments. The program also provides support for the conduct of EA through various means, such as federal-provincial agreements and policy criteria.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
3,117,153	3,117,153	3,116,066	3,116,066

Planned program spending in 2015–16 and beyond is forecasted to decrease by \$1.55 million in comparison with 2014–15, due mainly to sunseting programs which are subject to government budget decisions. Outcomes of such decisions would be reflected in the Agency's future budget exercises and Estimates documents.

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents [FTEs])

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
37	37	37

Performance Measurement

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Date to be Achieved
High-quality EAs enabled through research, analysis and monitoring to produce effective policy instruments	Percentage of users of Agency policy instruments who indicated moderate to high satisfaction with these instruments	75%	2015-16 and ongoing

Planning Highlights

To achieve the expected result for this program, the Agency plans to:

- Apply effective management practices in the development of EA policy and practice in accordance with CEAA 2012;
- Maintain and update the Agency's operational policy instruments to support employees in delivering high-quality EAs, and integrate organizational learning and research results on a regular basis;
- Provide information, guidance, and training to stakeholders, Aboriginal groups, and the public in support of the Agency's role in delivering EAs and in integrating Aboriginal consultation into the EA process;
- Improve the knowledge base for federal EA through research, reports to synthesize knowledge in key areas relevant to the practice of EA, and knowledge-transfer events for EA practitioners and policy officers;
- Collaborate with interested provincial and territorial governments to negotiate instruments to enable the application of CEAA 2012 provisions for cooperation, delegation, substitution, and/or equivalency;
- Strengthen its relationships with Aboriginal groups and develop a systematic approach to engaging with Aboriginal groups on policy issues;
- Provide advice to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada for the negotiation of EA provisions in agreements with Aboriginal groups;

- Explore potential opportunities to assess cumulative effects in a region by engaging with partners and stakeholders;
- Engage with international partners to support advancement of the practice of EA and to maintain effective relationships;
- Develop statutory and regulatory instruments as necessary, to advance the objectives of Responsible Resource Development;
- Provide training to other departments on strategic environmental assessment of policy, plan, and program proposals; and
- Work with federal authorities responsible for projects on federal lands and outside of Canada to achieve consistent implementation of CEAA 2012.

Program 1.2: Environmental Assessment Delivery

Description

This program ensures that high-quality environmental assessments of major projects are conducted and completed in a timely and predictable way, thereby supporting economic growth while preventing or reducing adverse environmental effects. The most appropriate means of avoiding duplication of assessment activities with other jurisdictions is applied, thereby increasing efficiency and providing certainty for all participants in the process. The Agency will promote, monitor, and facilitate compliance with the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*. The environmental assessment process provides for the meaningful participation of the public and Aboriginal groups. Aboriginal consultation obligations are integrated to the greatest extent possible with the federal environmental assessment process. As such, the Agency consults with Aboriginal groups during the environmental assessment process to assess how the proposed project may adversely impact potential or established Aboriginal or treaty rights and related interests, and find ways to avoid or minimize these adverse impacts. This program uses funding from the following transfer payments: the Participant Funding Program, and the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
9,476,761	9,476,761	9,326,182	9,326,182

Planned program spending in 2015–16 is forecasted to decrease by \$5.5 million, and by \$5.7 million in 2016–17 and beyond, in comparison with 2014–15 due mainly to sunseting programs which are subject to government budget decisions. Outcomes of such decisions would be reflected in the Agency's future budget exercises and Estimates documents.

Human Resources (FTEs)

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
71	70	70

Performance Measurement

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Date to be Achieved
Deliver EAs within timelines established under CEAA 2012	Percentage of EAs conducted by the Agency that adhere to CEAA 2012 timelines	100%	FY 2015–16 and Ongoing
EA process provides meaningful participation of Aboriginal groups and integrates Crown consultation to the greatest extent possible	Percentage of Aboriginal groups with high or moderate potential for being affected by a project that provided comments on EA documents to the Agency	90%	FY 2015–16
Deliver high-quality EAs	Percentage of projects undergoing follow-up and monitoring for which the Agency received a report during the reporting period that indicated that the mitigation measures set out in the EA decision statement would effectively address the environmental effects of the project	90%	FY 2015–16 and Ongoing
	Where adaptive management measures set out in the EA decision statement were required as a result of a follow-up and monitoring report and a report was received by the Agency on the implementation of those measures during the reporting period, the percentage of projects where the adaptive management measures led to effectively addressing the environmental effects of the project	90%	FY 2015–16 and Ongoing

Planning Highlights

To achieve the expected results, the Agency plans to:

- Apply effective management practices in planning and delivering the Agency’s statutory and policy-based responsibilities for federal EAs;
- Continue to develop and implement service standards, procedures, and guidance to support the Agency’s employees in delivering on its responsibilities;
- Lead interdepartmental committees to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices, and develop and implement strategies to improve consistency and timeliness in federal EAs;
- Maintain optimal tools, processes, and internal guidance to support the implementation of CEAA 2012 and, as needed, incorporate lessons learned to update them or develop new ones;
- Facilitate increased document availability on the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry Internet Site, and improve public access and participation in the EA process for EAs the Agency conducts;
- Work with provinces to identify the most efficient and effective means of accomplishing the goal of “one project, one review”;
- Work with federal authorities, as Crown Consultation Coordinator for federal EAs conducted by the Agency or by a review panel, to apply an efficient and effective whole-of-government approach to consultation with Aboriginal groups potentially affected by those projects;
- Undertake compliance and enforcement activities to ensure compliance with CEAA 2012 and, in particular, conditions set out in the Minister of the Environment’s EA decision statements;
- Seek opportunities to promote compliance with CEAA 2012 to proponents, industry associations, and other stakeholders;
- Ensure an effective and efficient implementation of the EA process in areas where CEAA 2012 and other impact assessment requirements established under land claims agreements coexist (e.g., *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, *Nisga’a Final Agreement*, *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*); and
- Through the Participant Funding Program, facilitate Aboriginal and public involvement in EAs for which the Agency is responsible.

Internal Services

Description

Internal Services are groups of related activities and resources that are administered to support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. Internal services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization, and not those provided to a specific program. The groups of activities are Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; and Acquisition Services.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
4,757,956	4,757,956	4,749,383	4,749,383

Planned program spending in 2015–16 and beyond is forecasted to decrease by \$6.2 million in comparison with 2014–15 due to the realignment of Internal Service resources to better reflect program-related spending, and due to sunseting programs which are subject to government budget decisions. Outcomes of such decisions would be reflected in the Agency's future budget exercises and Estimates documents.

Human Resources (FTEs)

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
50	50	50

Planning Highlights

To support achievement of the Agency's expected results including modernizing business and information management practices, the Agency plans to:

- Implement the Agency's Management Action Plan to enhance core control functions by the beginning of 2015–16;
- Transition to a new departmental financial management system—Systems, Applications, and Products (SAP)—beginning in 2015–16;

- Monitor and reinforce compliance with the Policy on Government Security and the *Privacy Act* and requirements outlined in the Treasury Board Secretariat's notice on Secure Use of Portable Data Storage Devices and the Directive on Privacy Practices;
- Transform the Agency's existing pay system, in collaboration with Public Works and Government Services Canada and Environment Canada, as part of government-wide initiatives;
- Complete the implementation of the new approach to employee performance management, including competency-based people management and performance reporting, ensuring consistency with the Treasury Board Secretariat Performance Management Directive that took effect on April 1, 2014;
- Continue implementing the 2014–15 Agency Learning Series, ensuring that it is aligned with the 2014–17 Agency Integrated Human Resources Plan and the 2014–17 Employment Equity Plan;
- Review information technology security guidelines and mitigate any security risks;
- Integrate and modernize information technology systems and information management practices to more efficiently support EA and Aboriginal consultation processes, by partnering with Public Works and Government Services Canada in its Shared Case Management System;
- Upgrade the Agency's electronic document and records management system to the government-wide standard, GCDOCS;
- Transition the Agency's online content to Canada.ca through the Web Renewal Initiative; and
- Implement a social media strategy for the Agency.

Section III: Supplementary Information

Future-Oriented Statement of Operations

The future-oriented condensed statement of operations provides a general overview of the Agency's operations which includes activities such as employee benefits, accommodations fees, and amortization. The forecast of financial information on expenses and revenues is prepared on an accrual accounting basis to strengthen accountability and to improve transparency and financial management.

Because the future-oriented condensed statement of operations is prepared on an accrual accounting basis and the forecast and planned spending amounts presented in other sections of the Report on Plans and Priorities are prepared on an expenditure basis, the amounts may differ.

A detailed future-oriented statement of operations and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net cost of operations to the requested authorities, can be found on the [Agency's website](#)^{iv}.

Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations For the Year Ended March 31 (dollars)

Financial Information	2014–15 Estimated Results	2015–16 Planned Results	Difference
Total expenses	37,717,558	22,553,910	15,163, 648
Total revenues	3,009,761	3,000,000	9,761
Net cost of operations	34,707,797	19,553,910	15,153,887

Total Agency operational expenses are expected to decrease by \$15.2 million, or 40 percent, from \$37.7 million in 2014–15 to \$22.5 million in 2015–16. This decrease is mainly attributable to the sunseting of funds. These sunseting programs are subject to government decisions as part of the budget process.

Supplementary Information Tables

The supplementary information tables listed in the *2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities* can be found on the [Agency's website](#)^v.

- ▶ Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy;
- ▶ Disclosure of Transfer Payment Programs Under \$5 Million; and
- ▶ Upcoming Internal Audits and Evaluations Over the Next Three Fiscal Years.

Tax Expenditures and Evaluations

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures annually in the *Tax Expenditures and Evaluations*^{vi} publication. The tax measures presented in the *Tax Expenditures and Evaluations* publication are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Section IV: Organizational Contact Information

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Appendix: Definitions

appropriation: Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures: Include operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

Departmental Performance Report: Reports on an appropriated organization's actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Reports on Plans and Priorities. These reports are tabled in Parliament in the fall.

full-time equivalent: Is a measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

Government of Canada outcomes: A set of 16 high-level objectives defined for the government as a whole, grouped in four spending areas: economic affairs, social affairs, international affairs and government affairs.

Management, Resources and Results Structure: A comprehensive framework that consists of an organization's inventory of programs, resources, results, performance indicators and governance information. Programs and results are depicted in their hierarchical relationship to each other and to the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute. The Management, Resources and Results Structure is developed from the Program Alignment Architecture.

non-budgetary expenditures: Include net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance: What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve and how well lessons learned have been identified.

performance indicator: A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

performance reporting: The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

planned spending: For Reports on Plans and Priorities (RPPs) and Departmental Performance Reports (DPRs), planned spending refers to those amounts that receive Treasury Board approval by February 1. Therefore, planned spending may include amounts incremental to planned expenditures presented in the Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their RPPs and DPRs.

plans: The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

priorities: Plans or projects that an organization has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired Strategic Outcome(s).

program: A group of related resource inputs and activities that are managed to meet specific needs and to achieve intended results and that are treated as a budgetary unit.

Program Alignment Architecture: A structured inventory of an organization's programs depicting the hierarchical relationship between programs and the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute.

Report on Plans and Priorities: Provides information on the plans and expected performance of appropriated organizations over a three-year period. These reports are tabled in Parliament each spring.

results: An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

Strategic Outcome: A long-term and enduring benefit to Canadians that is linked to the organization's mandate, vision and core functions.

sunset program: A time-limited program that does not have an ongoing funding and policy authority. When the program is set to expire, a decision must be made whether to continue the program. In the case of a renewal, the decision specifies the scope, funding level and duration.

target: A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

whole-of-government framework: Maps the financial contributions of federal organizations receiving appropriations by aligning their Programs to a set of 16 government-wide, high-level outcome areas, grouped under four spending areas.

Endnotes

- i. *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-15.21/index.html>
- ii. Whole-of-government framework, <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ppg-cpr/frame-cadre-eng.aspx>
- iii. 2015–16 Main Estimates, <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/esp-pbc/esp-pbc-eng.asp>
- iv. Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency,
<http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=en&n=76B8BC37-1&offset=&toc=hide>
- v. *ibid.*
- vi. *Tax Expenditures and Evaluations* publication, <http://www.fin.gc.ca/purl/taxexp-eng.asp>