



November 12, 2020

INFORMATION SHEET

Planning the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) has determined that a regional assessment will be conducted in an area centred on the Ring of Fire mineral deposits in northern Ontario, approximately 540 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay and 1,000 kilometres north of Toronto. The Minister has directed the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (Agency) to engage with Indigenous groups, non-government organizations, the Province of Ontario and other federal departments to discuss appropriate activities, outcomes and spatial and temporal boundaries for the regional assessment.

Developing the terms of reference and potential agreement

The Agency invites interested individuals, Indigenous communities, and organizations to participate in planning the regional assessment. Participants may provide information or views to the Agency as part of this planning process until January 21, 2021.

Input from participants will be considered by the Agency when it prepares the **draft terms of reference** for the regional assessment. The terms of reference establish the mandate of the Agency or a committee to conduct the assessment. This document will specify the study area, factors to be considered, time limits and other details about the assessment.

The Province of Ontario is considering how it may participate in the regional assessment. Under the *Impact Assessment Act*, the Minister may enter into an agreement with Ontario to jointly establish a committee to conduct a regional assessment that is not entirely on federal lands. If Ontario chooses this option, a **draft regional assessment agreement** will be prepared by the Agency and Ontario.

After the engagement process, the draft terms of reference (and draft regional assessment agreement, if applicable) will be prepared and made available for public review and comment before being finalized by the Minister.

Goal and outputs of the regional assessment

In consideration of the preamble, purposes and provisions of the *Impact Assessment Act*, the Agency has defined the **goal** of the regional assessment as:

To provide information and analysis regarding future developments in the Ring of Fire area and their potential effects in order to inform and improve impact assessments and other planning and decision-making processes in a way that helps protect the environmental, health, cultural, social and economic conditions of the area while also creating opportunities for sustainable economic development.

The terms of reference will outline outputs that the regional assessment will produce in order to achieve its stated goal. Participants are encouraged to provide input to the Agency to help define potential outputs of the regional assessment.

Examples of potential regional assessment outputs

- an inventory, compilation and presentation of existing scientific, technical and cultural information and Indigenous knowledge and the identification and analysis of key information gaps, requirements and opportunities;
- analysis of key potential environmental, health, cultural, social or economic effects that may result from future development activities in the region (project-specific and cumulative), including any key issues that should be considered in applicable regulatory and planning processes;

- identification of potential mitigation measures for future development activities, including standard mitigation, measures to address specific issues, or measures that could address regional-scale (non project-specific) issues; and
- recommendations on how to consider, implement or otherwise address the regional assessment outputs in future impact / environmental assessments or other regulatory processes, or through other initiatives by governments.

Participants are also invited to inform the Agency about any additional information, views, considerations or concerns that they may have that should be considered in planning the regional assessment. Below are some questions that participants may consider when preparing input for the Agency.

Questions for consideration

1. ENGAGEMENT

Do you or your organization have a preferred way you would like to engage in the planning (or eventual conduct) of the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire area? The Agency recognizes that, in light of Covid-19, individuals and groups may have specific requirements for how they would like to be engaged at this time.

Please provide any preferences, requirements or recommendations for engagement.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE & POTENTIAL JOINT AGREEMENT

Do you or your organization have any input or recommendations for the content of the terms of reference and/or possible joint agreement for the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire area?

In particular, the Agency is looking for information and your views regarding appropriate outputs that would contribute to the goal of the regional assessment, as well as on how the assessment should be conducted.

3. INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE

Do you or your organization have information, knowledge, studies, or reports that may be relevant to the conduct of the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire area that you would like to identify at this time?

Please specify the information, studies and/or reports as appropriate.

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Do you or your organization have any additional and relevant information or knowledge, not specified above, that you would like to share with the Agency?

Agency employees are available to discuss the regional assessment and funding opportunities. To contact the Agency or to join the email distribution list for the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire area, please email jaac.regionalrof-cdfregionale.aeic@canada.ca. Members of the distribution list will receive email notifications when engagement or funding opportunities are posted on the [project home page](#) of the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site (reference number [80468](#)).