



Natural Resources Canada

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Public Statement of Environmental Effects: Clean Energy Fund

Description

Budget 2009 created the Clean Energy Fund (CEF) as part of its actions to ensure a healthy environment by supporting clean energy research, development and demonstration (RD&D) projects, including large-scale carbon capture and storage (CCS) and research on clean energy technologies. The CEF supports the Government's commitment in the *November 2008 Speech from the Throne* to make greater use of technologies that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from energy production and, thus, contribute to the Government's overall commitments to reduce Canada's total GHG emissions by 20 percent from 2006 levels by 2020. The Fund also supports the Government's commitment that 90 percent of Canada's electricity needs be provided by non-emitting sources such as hydro, nuclear, clean coal or wind power by 2020.

Summary of SEA Results

In accordance with the *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*, a Detailed Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was conducted for the Clean Energy Fund. The SEA concluded that long-term benefits to the environment may be expected from the CEF resulting in air-quality improvements and reduction of GHG emissions in line with Canada's climate change objectives. Potential negative environmental impacts will be minimized through project selection criteria, appropriate planning and operating practices and the implementation of mitigation measures.

Projects arising from this proposal will be assessed as per the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and other applicable legislation, as appropriate, prior to decisions being made.

Environmental Effects

While some of the initiatives included in the Clean Energy Fund may have negative environmental consequences, important long-term benefits to the environment may be expected from the proposed CEF via the research, development, demonstration and deployment of technologies and practices, which are aimed to stimulate future economic uptake and the growth of a non-emitting

energy industry. The proposed CEF is anticipated to result in air quality improvements and reductions of GHG emissions in line with Canada's climate change objectives.

It is anticipated that the initiatives contained in the Clean Energy Fund will not result in significant adverse environmental effects. However, it is recognized that in the long term, the deployment of CCS technologies and of renewable electricity and thermal energy systems may contribute to potential cumulative effects in certain regions of Canada.

Potential negative environmental impacts identified through the SEA are primarily project- and site-specific and will vary depending on the initiative. A preliminary list of issues that may arise includes issues related to air quality/air emissions, water quality, terrestrial environment and accidents and malfunctions.

Enhancement, Mitigation and Follow-up Measures

Opportunities to enhance expected environmental benefits from the CEF may be provided by: 1) leveraging and collaborating with provincial/territorial and international jurisdictions and industry to maximize benefits and synergies; 2) sharing results and lessons learned related to engineering, management and other aspects of research, development and demonstration of CEF technologies; and 3) communicating benefits of clean energy technologies to the public.

There may be the potential for negative environmental impacts as the shift is made to developing and deploying cleaner technologies and energy sources. However, these impacts will be mitigated through project selection criteria, appropriate planning and operating practices and through the implementation of enhancement and mitigation measures, including measures to address potential cumulative effects.

Mitigation measures will often be project-specific. For the most part, construction and operation activities for these projects will be regulated through federal, provincial and municipal legislation and associated regulations, standards and guidelines. Federally, the environment is protected through several pieces of legislation, including the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*, the *Species at Risk Act*, the *Fisheries Act* and the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*. Provincially, there is also environmental protection legislation and regulations associated with air quality/emissions, water quality and waste water disposal and habitat protection. Proponents will be required to obtain necessary permits and approvals prior to construction and operation. These controls will help to mitigate any significant adverse impacts arising from the proposed projects.

Regional assessments and specific research regarding key environmental concerns associated with energy facilities may contribute to future analysis of any wider implementation of CCS technologies and renewable electricity and thermal energy systems.

Results of Consultations

In the context of the SEA, public consultation regarding the proposed program has not been

undertaken. However, [NRCan](#) identified the [RD&D](#) priorities under the [CEF](#) by recent consultations with stakeholders, including the National Advisory Panel on Sustainable Energy Science and Technology, the Energy Technology Working Group of the Council of Energy Ministers, as well as published studies from the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, and the Canadian Academy of Engineering. [NRCan](#) has also taken into consideration current provincial clean energy initiatives with a view to maximizing the potential synergies between [CEF](#) and these initiatives.

Aboriginal and Northern communities will be duly consulted in advance of project development in their communities or on their traditional lands.

It is possible that public participation may be undertaken through a federal environmental assessment if a federal environmental assessment is triggered. It is also possible that public participation may occur through the provincial environmental assessment process, as required.

Relevant Links

For more information on the Clean Energy Fund, please visit: cef-fep.nrcan-rncan.gc.ca.

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