

News Release

The Government of Canada Approves Pacific NorthWest LNG Project

September 27, 2016 — Vancouver — Government of Canada

The Government of Canada is working to grow our economy, create good jobs for the middle class and opportunities for Canadians while protecting the environment for future generations. As the Prime Minister has emphasized, the only way to get resources to market in the twenty-first century, is if it is done sustainably and responsibly. Today's announcement reflects this commitment. It is also an example of the successful application of the [Interim Principles](#) for project assessments announced in January.

Today, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, the Honourable Catherine McKenna, the Minister of Natural Resources, the Honourable Jim Carr, and the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, announced the Federal Cabinet's decision to approve the \$11 billion Pacific NorthWest LNG Project after a rigorous federal environmental assessment.

The Pacific NorthWest LNG Project is a major opportunity to grow the economy. The project represents one of Canada's largest resource development projects with a total capital investment of up to \$36 billion when accounting for upstream natural gas development. During construction, the project will create an estimated 4500 jobs and an additional 630 direct and indirect jobs during the operation of the facility. As well as benefiting from job creation throughout the region, local First Nations communities will also benefit significantly through agreements reached with the proponent.

The project is subject to over 190 legally binding conditions, determined through extensive scientific study, that will lessen the environmental impacts of the project. For example, Pacific NorthWest LNG Ltd. will be required to comply with mitigation measures that will minimize adverse effects on fish, fish habitat, marine mammals, wetlands, migratory birds, and human health.

The project will be subject to a rigorous compliance and enforcement regime, which includes establishing environmental monitoring committees comprised of Indigenous peoples, and federal and provincial representatives, for the first time ever. Technical experts will monitor the project and will have the authority to stop project activities that do not comply with the conditions.

In reviewing the project, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change applied the interim principles for environmental assessments announced in January with the Minister of Natural Resources, Jim Carr, designed to restore confidence of Canadians in the process. Examples of how the principles were applied to this project are detailed below. The decision also imposes – for the first time ever – a maximum cap on annual project greenhouse gas emissions.

Decisions based on science, traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples and other relevant evidence:

Scientific experts from Natural Resources Canada, Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada and Health Canada provided scientific and technical advice throughout the assessment. Indigenous peoples brought forward traditional knowledge including observations about marine conditions that prompted additional study. The review period was extended so that federal scientists could thoroughly assess the proponent's information, require supplementary studies and review additional external research. As a result of this review, mitigation measures and monitoring requirements were put in place. Critically, scientists found no significant effects on fish with the legally-binding mitigation and monitoring conditions.

Views of the public and affected communities were sought and considered: The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency conducted extensive consultations throughout the environmental assessment and also provided four formal opportunities for public comments and input. Over 34,000 comments were received from individuals and groups on the draft environmental assessment report. Concerns raised by the public included

effects on fish and fish habitat, the volume of greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on Indigenous rights and title. Support for the project focused on the project's economic impact and job creation. This valuable public input was carefully reviewed, considered, documented and taken into account in the development of the environmental report and conditions. Some communities expressed concern about the impact of increased marine shipping. Our government is committed to strengthening the marine safety regime.

Indigenous peoples were meaningfully consulted, and where appropriate, impacts on their rights and interests were accommodated: Consultations were extensive with Indigenous communities with funding of over \$480,000 provided to support their participation in the environmental assessment. Project conditions address the impact on the current use of land and resources by Indigenous peoples for traditional purposes. Indigenous groups near the project site participated in technical working groups. These groups will also participate with Canada and the province in environmental monitoring, a new innovative approach that is consistent with the government's reconciliation agenda and commitment to enhance the capacity of Indigenous groups in reviewing and monitoring major resource development projects.

Direct and upstream greenhouse gas emissions linked to the projects under review were assessed: The decision imposes – for the first time ever - a maximum cap on annual project greenhouse gas emissions. This cap means direct greenhouse gas emissions from the project will be capped at a maximum of 4.3 Mt of CO₂e per year, 900,000 tonnes less than what had initially been proposed by the proponent. In addition, upstream emissions will be reduced by the government's commitment to regulate methane emissions from the oil and gas sector, and by British Columbia's plan for electrification of upstream extraction of natural gas.

First Ministers agreed in the Vancouver Declaration to implement policies to meet Canada's 2030 target. As a result, emissions from all projects, including this one, must fit within Canada's plan to meet that target, which First Ministers will discuss this Fall. British Columbia's commitment that it will increase its carbon price in line with the Pan Canadian Framework to be announced later this Fall reflects this principle.

Quotes

"The Pacific NorthWest LNG Project will deliver thousands of good middle-class jobs and will help pay for schools and roads and social programs that enrich people's lives. We are moving forward with natural resource development in a sustainable manner, because we have an obligation to leave the planet in better shape than we found it. This is an exciting day for British Columbia, for Canada and for the natural gas industry in this country."

– The Honourable Jim Carr, Minister of Natural Resources

"The only way to get resources to market in the twenty-first century is if they can be done in a responsible and sustainable manner. This decision reflects this objective. With the legally binding conditions we are putting in place and with British Columbia's commitment to increase its price on carbon in line with the Pan Canadian Framework, I am confident that we will minimize the environmental impacts of the project and ensure that it proceeds in the most sustainable manner possible."

– The Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

"The Pacific NorthWest LNG proposal will bring great economic benefit to middle class British Columbians and First Nations. Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) scientists have conducted thorough reviews of proponent submissions at every step of the environmental assessment process and determined that the potential risks to fish and fish habitat can be mitigated. DFO will also be part of the strict ongoing monitoring required to ensure that all conditions are followed. The project will also require regulatory approvals from DFO and detailed information on mitigation, monitoring and offsetting will be required from the proponent before approvals are made."

– The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

Associated Links

- [Environmental Assessment Decision Statement and Conditions](#)
- [Environmental Assessment Report](#) and [project](#) information
- [Interim approach and principles](#) for environmental assessments

-30-

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