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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Canada's leading thinkers converge to find solutions on environmental assessment

Experts gather to discuss how decisions should be made on projects like pipelines

OTTAWA – Experts from across the country are gathering this week in Ottawa for a highly anticipated “meeting of the minds” to help shape the future of environmental assessment (EA) in Canada.

The three-day Federal Environmental Assessment Reform Summit (May 1-3), organized by West Coast Environmental Law, provides a unique opportunity for academics, legal experts, Indigenous representatives and ministry staff to weigh in on solutions as the government prepares for an overhaul of its current system for approving new projects such as pipelines and mines. Federal Environment and Climate Change Minister Catherine McKenna will be in attendance this morning to meet with participants and share remarks.

“Canada needs a modern law for its modern resource problems, and we have the right people for the job,” said Anna Johnston, Staff Counsel with West Coast Environmental Law. “Our goal is to come away from this summit with clear recommendations from top Canadian experts on this issue, to inform a visionary new framework that ensures communities can have their voices heard on projects that affect their environment.”

This important gathering follows commitments from the federal government to address serious gaps and problems in Canada's current EA framework, which has been widely criticized as a “broken system.” In his [mandate letter](#) to Minister McKenna, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called on the Minister to “immediately review Canada's environmental assessment processes to regain public trust” and introduce new, fair processes that restore proper oversight and ensure science-based decision-making.

“It's clear that our current system isn't working. Environmental assessment is a very important issue for Canadians, and now is our chance to get Canada back on track when it comes to making decisions about projects like oil pipelines,” said Johnston.

The federal government is expected to announce details about its upcoming review of EA processes early this summer. The summit continues until Tuesday, May 3rd at the University of Ottawa, and the resulting recommendations are intended to help inform the government's review.

NOTE: *Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change will make her remarks today, Monday, May 2nd at 8:45 a.m. EST*

Location: *Room 12102, Desmarais Building, 55 Laurier Avenue East, University of Ottawa ([view map](#))*

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