



OVERVIEW OF HEALTH CANADA'S ENVIRONMENTAL / IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

OVERVIEW: HEALTH CANADA'S RÔLE IN ENVIRONMENTAL/ IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

Under environmental/impact assessment regimes, Health Canada provides **expertise** in support of the **review of proposed major infrastructure or resource projects** within **legislative timelines**.

INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL/IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REGIMES

Context

- Health Canada contributes to assessments conducted under federal legislation across Canada, which includes the Impact Assessment Act (IAA), the former *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* (CEAA 2012) (by **legislative requirement**) and Northern assessments conducted under agreements in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Inuit Nunangat.
 - The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) leads assessments initiated under the IAA and those continuing for decision under CEAA 2012.
 - The Northern Projects Management Office coordinates the contributions of federal departments and agencies to assessments led by Northern boards.
- On August 28, 2019, the IAA came into force, repealing CEAA 2012. The IAA seeks to **foster sustainability, ensure that Indigenous rights are respected, encourage investment and create economic opportunities.**

FEDERAL AND TERRITORIAL EA/IA REGIMES



IAA
Impact Assessment Act

CEAA 2012
Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 (or previous)

IFA
Inuvialuit Final Agreement

JBNQA
James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement

NuPPAA
Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act

YESAA
Yukon Socio-Economic Assessment Act

MVRMA
Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act

WHAT WE DO: HEALTH CANADA'S ONGOING ROLE UNDER CEAA 2012, IAA AND NORTHERN ASSESSMENT REGIMES

- Health Canada reviews health assessments completed by project proponents to ensure the analysis is suitable for estimating future health impacts and defining mitigation measures.
 - Provides scientific expertise on direct and indirect health impacts of major projects by integrating expert information and knowledge from subject matter expert areas across the Department (e.g., the Food Directorate within the Health Products and Food Branch).
 - Participates in Government of Canada consultations with Indigenous peoples to support the whole-of-government consultation process.
 - Develops guidance on assessing project-related risks to health for use by project proponents.
- Health Canada's role in decision-making:
 - Under the IAA and CEAA 2012, Health Canada only plays a role in decision-making when final project decisions are referred to the Governor-in-Council, whereby one of the Health Ministers participate in Cabinet deliberations.
 - Health Canada does not play a role in decision-making in the Northern assessment regimes.
- Health Canada does not have a regulatory role under any of the regimes.

WHAT WE DO: HEALTH CANADA'S EXPERTISE

Proposed project
↓
Change to natural and human environments
↓

Effects on health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples and all Canadians

DIRECT EFFECTS ON HEALTH

Air Quality

Water Quality

Noise

Radiation

Electromagnetic Fields

INDIRECT EFFECTS ON HEALTH

Country Food Safety

Chemical Emergencies

METHODS FOR ASSESSING HEALTH EFFECTS

Human Health Risk Assessment

Health Impact Assessment

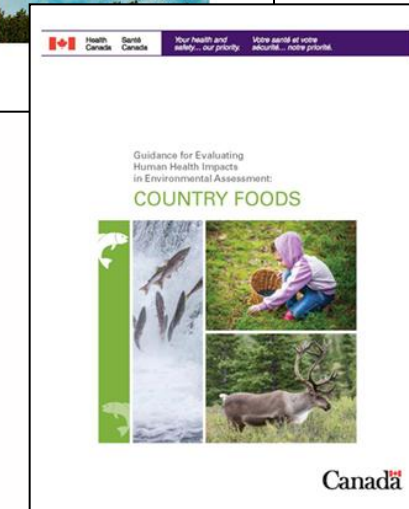
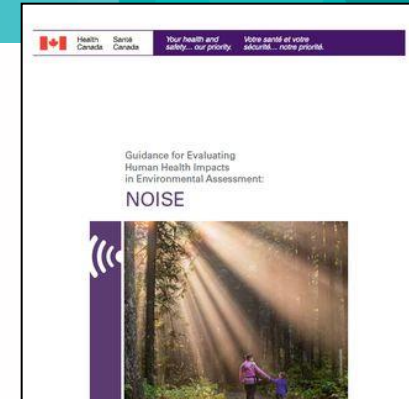
CUMULATIVE/REGIONAL EFFECTS ON HEALTH

FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING

IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESEARCH FUND

GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT THE IAA

- HC's Environmental/Impact Assessment program has published **six guidance documents on how to assess the health impacts of proposed major projects** (e.g., noise, water quality, country foods).
- To date, published guidance has focused on **biophysical determinants of health** and risk assessment methods.
- **New HIA guidance** will support assessment of a broader suite of determinants of health in the context of impact assessment and reflects:
 - the broader **scope of health** and requirement to assess **interaction of effects** under the *Impact Assessment Act*;
 - emphasis on **GBA+**; and,
 - the commitment to meaningful **engagement and partnership with Indigenous peoples**.
- By **transparently outlining best practices**, the guidance facilitates high quality assessment of health impacts and benefits project proponents, IAAC, HC and ultimately **Canadians**.



HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

is “a combination of procedures, methods and tools that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, plan, programme or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population”¹.

also supports identifying actions to mitigate potential negative health effects and enhance benefits.

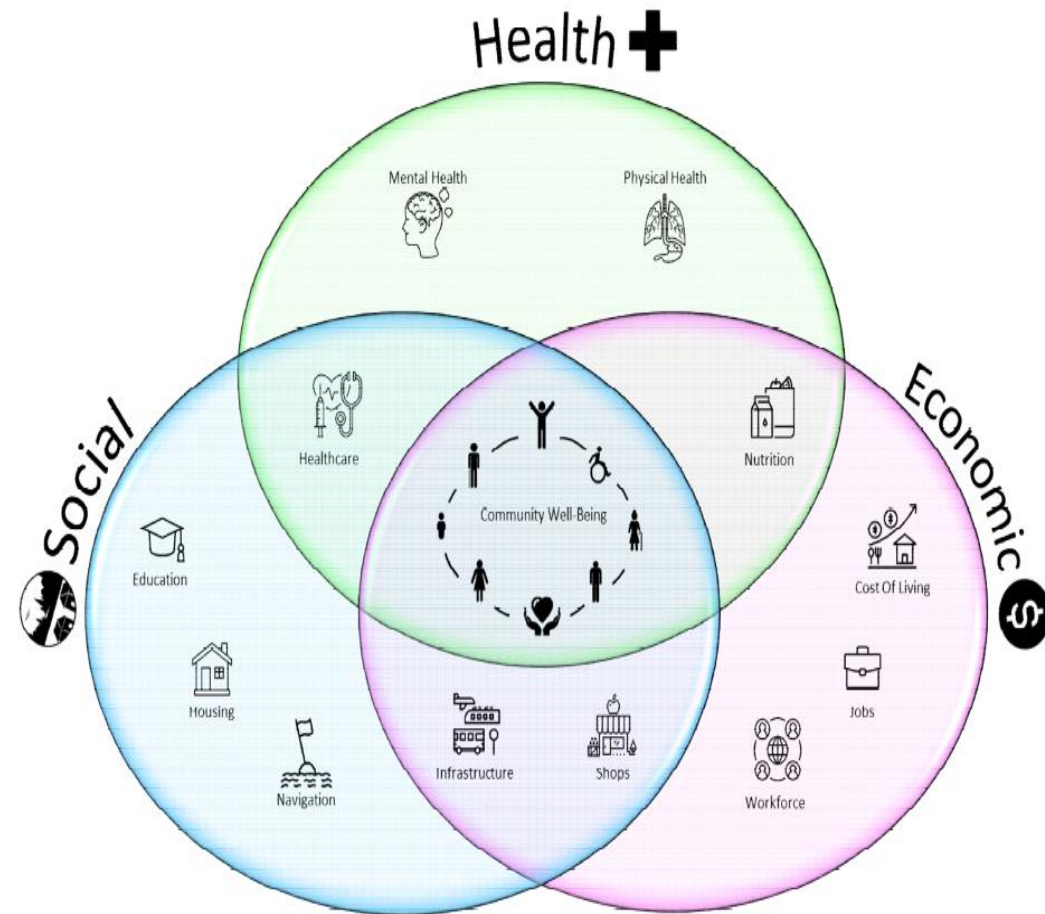


Figure Source: Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, 2020.

¹ Quigley, R., den Broeder, L., Furu, P., Bond, A., Cave, B. & Bos, R. (2006). Health Impact Assessment International Best Practice Principles. Special Publication Series No. 5. Fargo, USA: International Association for Impact Assessment.

COUNTRY FOODS

- Health Canada has recently updated its guidance for human health risk assessments that consider changes to country food quality from projects
- More broadly, traditional Indigenous food systems may contribute to food security, which is a social determinant of health
- Health Canada has drafted a paper that summarizes how impacts on traditional food security have been or could be measured
- Three Sisters Consulting is engaging with interested First Nation and Métis partners on the draft paper in Winter/Spring
- Additional community-based engagement is planned for next year
- Engagement on methods specific to Northern projects will follow

NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS HEALTH

HC's Environmental/Impact Assessment program has retained the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health to:

- collaborate with us over the next four years
- lead the development of Indigenous-specific resources on health impact assessments, and
- focus on distinctions-based resources with Inuit, Métis and First Nations lenses.



National Collaborating Centre
for Indigenous Health