

News Release

Invitation to the public to comment on an agreement on the Eastmain-1-A and Rupert diversion project

HULL, Quebec - February 27, 2003 - The Minister of the Environment, the Honourable David Anderson, pursuant to his authority under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, has referred the environmental assessment of the [Eastmain-1-A and Rupert diversion project](#) to a review panel, following a request by the Honourable Robert Thibault, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency has reached a [draft administrative agreement](#) with the Ministère de l'Environnement du Québec and the Cree Regional Authority for the coordination of the environmental assessment processes applicable to the project.

The agreement recognizes the establishment of two review bodies with five members each: a review panel under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and a review committee under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement.

The agreement makes it possible to bring together the requirements and services needed to coordinate the environmental assessment processes, including joint public meetings and hearings. Common deadlines are set out for the completion of the key steps in implementing each process. The agreement also advocates the preparation of one set of directives on the scope of the impact assessment to be submitted by Hydro-Québec and its subsidiary, the *Société d'énergie de la Baie James*, the project proponents.

The Agency will accept public comments on the draft agreement until March 28, 2003. All documents submitted will be added to the project's public registry. Once the public's comments are reviewed, the agreement will be signed by the three parties and made public.

Copies are also available on request. All comments should be sent to the address below.

Further information on the project, the environmental assessment processes, the federal [Participant Funding Program](#) and the next steps are contained in the attached [backgrounder](#).

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The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency administers the federal environmental assessment process, which identifies the environmental effects of proposed projects and measures to address those effects, in support of sustainable development.

For more information:

Robert Deslauriers
Senior Communications Advisor
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
Tel.: (819) 953-9407
Fax: (819) 953-2891
E-mail: robert.deslauriers@ceaa-acee.gc.ca

Elise Dhaussy
Senior Communications Advisor
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
Tel.: (819) 953-4054
Fax: (819) 953-2891
E-mail: elise.dhaussy@ceaa-acee.gc.ca

Comments may be forwarded to:

Jean Crépault
Panel Manager
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
200 Sacré-Cœur Blvd., 13th Floor
Hull, Quebec K1A 0H3

Tel.: (819) 953-2989
Fax: (819) 997-4931
E-mail: jean.crepault@ceaa-acee.gc.ca

To obtain a copy of the draft agreement:

Martynn St-André
Information Officer
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
200 Sacré-Cœur Blvd., 13th Floor
Hull, Quebec K1A 0H3
Tel.: (819) 994-4049
Fax: (819) 997-4931
E-mail: martynn.st-andre@ceaa-acee.gc.ca



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