

Why fishermen are asking for Federal Environmental Assessment

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More Than NS

The impact of Northern Pulps proposed effluent treatment facility is not restricted to Nova Scotia. Northern Pulp's proposed project has the potential to impact fisheries from three provinces as well as First Nations commercial and food fisheries. It has the potential to affect species at risk, and to impact the Canada brand for lobster and other species.

Meets Criteria

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) recognizes that there will be situations where a project not automatically covered by the Act should be considered for designation for federal assessment under CEAA 2012. Northern Pulps proposed effluent treatment facility meets the criteria, and meets the intent of the law relating to the federal government's role.

More Detailed

A federal environmental assessment would require a more detailed assessment process with more time for public input.

Conflict

The NS Provincial government is a party to designing the treatment facility. They have contributed \$300,000 to fund the design. As a party to the design, it is difficult for the NS government to be, or be perceived to be, an unbiased judge of the proposal.

NS Process Weak

The 2017 report of the NS Auditor General indicated that between 2013 -2016, the province approved 53 of 54 projects presented for environmental assessment. The Auditor General underlined weaknesses in the NS environmental assessment process, including weaknesses in monitoring and enforcement of terms and conditions. He noted that this was not a new problem but had been raised previously and not corrected.

NS Fast-Tracked

The NS government decided to conduct a fast-track, Class 1 environmental assessment, with only 30 days for public input once the project is registered by Northern Pulp, rather than require a more in-depth Class 2 environmental assessment.

Inaccurate Info

The NS Minister of Environment has responded to public concerns by repeating inaccurate information identical to claims made by Northern Pulp. Specifically, the NS Minister of Environment has downplayed the potential impact of the proposed project by saying that effluent has been going into the Northumberland Strait for 50 years. This gives the appearance that the Minister has already made a decision, prior to conducting an environmental assessment and without considering independent scientific information or independent examination of information provided by Northern Pulp.

NS Liable

The province is bound by an Indemnity Agreement which makes the province liable to pay for any losses NP may suffer from not being able to continue to use Boat Harbour until 2030. This creates a major incentive for the provincial government to approve NP's proposed project, regardless of its environmental impact.