

Federal, Provincial and Territorial Energy and Mines Ministers Agree to Collaborate on Priorities for the Upcoming Year

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Winnipeg

Public trust in the sustainable development of natural resources is essential to moving resource projects forward, creating jobs and regional economic development opportunities, and transitioning towards a low-carbon economy.

Canada's federal, provincial and territorial energy and mines ministers met this week in Winnipeg for the annual Energy and Mines Ministers' Conference. The conference theme — Enhancing Public Confidence in Canada's Natural Resource Sectors — underscored the need to ensure that economic growth and environmental stewardship go hand in hand.

The ministers agreed on the importance of strengthening public confidence in the natural resource sectors through enhanced community engagement, science and evidence-based decision-making, robust regulatory frameworks and improving environmental performance, including oversight and safety of Canada's pipeline safety regimes.

The ministers recognized that development of natural resources and related infrastructure must always be in compliance with the highest standards for public safety and environmental protection, which are the foundation of a clean growth economy. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to bring Canada's natural resources to domestic and international markets as a key element in supporting long-term job creation and economic growth while strengthening access to energy.

Ministers had the opportunity to exchange perspectives with Indigenous peoples about some of the challenges and opportunities relating to energy and mineral development and regulation. Discussion was held about possible ways to improve engagement with Indigenous leaders around Energy and Mines Ministers' Conferences.

To support public confidence, ministers agreed to build on the work of the past year and develop a joint action plan that includes a common narrative and is based on the following principles:

- Foster relationships and partnerships through early and sustained engagement and collaboration;
- Improve the communication and transparency of data and regulatory processes;

- Balance community interests and mitigate environmental and health impacts through regulation and legislation; and,
- Support science and innovation to inform decisions and enhance environmental performance.

The ministers discussed the Government of Canada's comprehensive review of federal environmental and regulatory processes, including its plans to modernize the National Energy Board. Ministers committed to working together to ensure that provincial and territorial perspectives are reflected in the ongoing review of federal regulatory processes, including on issues of: safety and environmental protection, Indigenous and local community consultation, delivering economic benefits, minimizing duplication on project reviews, investor confidence, competitiveness and timeliness. The ministers also recognized that collaborative approaches to innovation and the development of clean technologies can encourage clean growth in the minerals and energy sectors across Canada.

The ministers also publicly released the major projects summary report, which indicates that 421 major natural resource projects are planned or under construction over the next ten years, representing \$691 billion in potential investment.

Energy

With regard to energy, ministers affirmed that strengthening collaboration between governments will be critical to ensuring that Canada's energy sectors remain globally competitive and to supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy. In this regard, ministers committed to the following:

- In the area of energy efficiency, ministers agreed to a framework and action plan on energy efficiency standards for appliances and equipment, which can lower energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions across Canada;
- On electricity and strategic infrastructure, ministers agreed to explore collaboration on new and enhanced inter-jurisdictional electricity transmission interties, smart electricity grids and charging or refuelling stations for alternative-fuel vehicles, which can be a key tool in supporting clean growth, opening up new markets and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- On technology and innovation, ministers welcomed the work of the innovation clusters on distributed power generation and shale resources, and noted that these clusters are an effective mechanism for collaboration that can encourage federal, provincial and territorial governments and other stakeholders to leverage each other's expertise and resources. Ministers also agreed to explore collaboration opportunities in clean technology; and
- On international energy cooperation, ministers discussed how collaborative efforts across governments will support commitments made at the recent North

American Leaders' Summit, including the North American target for clean power, ambitious goals to integrate our transportation networks, increased cross-border transmission of clean energy and enhanced resiliency of the North American electricity grid. Ministers committed to enhance partnership and collaboration on international energy issues to open new markets and position Canada as a global energy leader. Ministers also committed to explore mechanisms and opportunities for provinces and territories to collaborate in international fora, joint missions and discussions on energy, including Mission Innovation.

Provincial and territorial ministers also welcomed the collaboration of the federal government in the implementation of the Canadian Energy Strategy on specific initiatives in the areas of energy efficiency, energy technology and innovation, and energy delivery. This collaboration includes a commitment to reduce diesel use in Indigenous, remote and off-grid communities, and to convene a Pan-Canadian Summit to identify options to improve access to diesel alternatives. Consistent with the Vancouver Declaration, Canadian Energy Strategy work will also contribute to the development of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change.

Mineral Development

The ministers reaffirmed the fundamental importance of Canada's exploration, mining and mineral processing industry to our economy, our financial sector and to our remote and indigenous communities. Maintaining and enhancing Canada's attractiveness as a global mining and exploration destination are critical to the health of our economy and to the ongoing development of our country.

Recognizing the importance of Canada's junior exploration and mining sector in identifying and developing the next generation of economic mineral deposits, the ministers committed to seeking out opportunities for collaboration to enhance mineral geoscience programs across jurisdictions and to expanding the availability of public geoscience data to help facilitate grassroots exploration by the junior mining sector.

Canada's federal, provincial and territorial mines ministers emphasized the importance of promoting stable, coordinated and supportive regulatory regimes governing our nation's abundant resources and the importance of extensive and reliable networks of infrastructure.

Ministers recognized the need to build on Canada's reputation as a global leader in environmental performance and worker health safety standards. Ministers committed to continue identifying new and innovative methods for managing environmental liability and to developing a consistent and transparent methodology for calculating mine reclamation security, including the total amount of liability that exists.

The ministers also encouraged industry leaders to promote innovation and enhance opportunities for the development, deployment and commercialization of green mining

technology to continue improving the environmental performance and competitiveness of Canadian mining companies and ensure healthy ecosystems for future generations.

The Mining Sector Performance Report was also tabled for release at the ministers' meeting. This report is produced every three years and tracks progress with a set of economic, social and environmental indicators and helps to identify areas for collaborative efforts.

Looking ahead

These actions, taken by federal, provincial and territorial governments, will promote Canada's role as a global supplier of natural resources while ensuring long-term economic prosperity for all Canadians.

The ministers will meet again in August 2017 in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, for the next Energy and Mines Ministers' Conference.

Quotes

"The natural resource sectors are an important source of jobs and benefits to the middle class. We will continue to work with various levels of government, Indigenous groups, industry and other stakeholders to ensure that Canada's resource sectors remain sustainable, globally competitive and sources of jobs and economic growth, now and into the future."

Jim Carr

Canada's Minister of Natural Resources

"Innovative partnerships between governments, Indigenous communities, industry and other stakeholders are critical as we move toward the creation of a sustainable and prosperous energy and mines sector in Canada. This week's meetings allowed energy and mines ministers from every region of our country to share how they are pursuing our common goals of strengthened communities, diversified economies and enhanced quality of life for all Canadians."

Cliff Cullen

Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade for Manitoba