The Importance of Indigenous and Northern Women’s Experiences and Knowledges in Impact Assessments

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Summary

Based on a decade of research in collaboration with northern and Indigenous women, organizations, and governments in resource-affected communities, we support the passage of Bill C-69: An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act...
Finding 1

Our research strongly supports the inclusion of several of the mandatory factors for consideration in impact assessments [Part 1, s. 22(1)], particularly “(s) the intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors”.

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Finding 2

Our research demonstrates the importance of ensuring that Indigenous women’s voices and experiences are given explicit attention in the configuration of consultation mechanisms and supporting structures within the *Impact Assessment Act*. 
Finding 3

Our research highlights possibilities for ensuring more genuine efforts to link western science and Indigenous knowledges for the purpose of informing impact assessments.
Final Thoughts

This is an important moment in time with the intersection of the federal government’s proposed changes to impact assessments and its commitment to undertaking gender-based analysis (GBA+).

We need new and meaningful ways forward in impact assessments, that honour the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and that are attentive and responsive to the experiences of northern and Indigenous women.