Plan of Priorities

under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA) – **2025**

Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada

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1 Introduction

On June 13, 2023, Bill S-5, *Strengthening Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada Act* (the Bill) received royal assent. Bill S-5 modernized the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA or the Act) by recognizing that every individual in Canada has a right to a healthy environment as provided for in CEPA, strengthening Canada's chemicals management regime and increasing transparency in the way it is administered. Substances are a part of everyday life, essential to our economy, our communities, and our homes. While they provide benefits, they may also have harmful effects on human health and the environment if not properly managed.

As part of efforts to increase openness and transparency, the Government of Canada (the Government) has developed a Plan of Priorities (the Plan). This Plan outlines upcoming priorities to manage substances to protect the health of people in Canada and the environment. To ensure the Plan remains relevant, effective and aligned with current and future needs, it will be subject to ongoing review and reprioritization, as needed. The Plan may change because of factors such as emerging scientific evidence, shifts in government priorities and resources, and international developments.

The Plan builds on Canada's strong foundation for chemicals management under its Chemicals Management Plan (CMP). As Canada works to complete the remaining activities under the current phase of the CMP ending in March 2026, this Plan offers an open and transparent means of communicating the Government of Canada's intentions with respect to planned activities for addressing substances in Canada over the next several years. The Plan outlines the substances prioritized for assessment and other activities to assess, control or manage the risks to the environment or human health as well as activities that promote the development and incorporation of alternative methods and strategies to replace, reduce or refine vertebrate animal testing.

The assessment priorities and activities described in the Plan are supported by Canada's core environmental law, CEPA. CEPA enables the delivery of many environmental and health protection programs for the well-being of people in Canada and the environment. CEPA provides the authorities for the Government to protect people in Canada and the environment from substances that may pose a risk to human health and the environment throughout their life cycle. The Government is committed to developing chemical risk management strategies that uphold the principle of environmental justice and protect the right to a healthy environment provided for in CEPA through implementation of this Plan and the administration of chemicals management. This includes making information available and supporting Indigenous participation in chemicals management, which contributes to achieving the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

As per section 73(1) of CEPA, this Plan specifies:

(a) the substances to which the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health (the Ministers) are satisfied priority should be given in assessing whether they are toxic or capable of becoming toxic;
(b) activities or initiatives in relation to assessing, controlling or otherwise managing the risks to the environment or to human health posed by substances that are or will be undertaken under an Act of Parliament for whose administration either Minister is responsible and which the Ministers are of the opinion should be prioritized; and

(c) activities or initiatives to promote the development and timely incorporation of scientifically justified alternative methods and strategies in the testing and assessment of substances to replace, reduce or refine the use of vertebrate animals.

The Act requires that the Ministers review the Plan within eight years and every eight years after that. In implementing the Plan, the Government aims to balance predictability with agility, responding to emerging priorities, as needed. The Government's progress towards implementing the Plan will be reported annually as part of the CEPA annual report.

2 Substances prioritized for assessment under CEPA

Section 68 of CEPA provides the authority to, among other things, determine if a substance is toxic or capable of becoming toxic to human health or the environment according to section 64. Assessments may take into consideration available information on the exposure to, and the hazard, use, source, and fate of a substance. Available information may include Indigenous knowledge. A weight of evidence approach and precaution are applied when conducting assessments. Assessments will also take into account, where information is available, populations who may be disproportionately impacted by exposures or more susceptible to substances and effects on human health and the environment from cumulative exposures to a range of substances.

The approach for the identification of chemicals and polymers as assessment priorities under Part 5 of CEPA (Controlling Toxic Substances) was developed to systematically compile and review information on substances. This approach has been applied periodically to identify emerging priorities for assessment. Building on experience gained from these activities, key drivers for the selection of substances as priorities for assessment were identified, including:

- substances that are hazardous to human health or the environment, including carcinogens, mutagens, reproductive toxicants as well as endocrine disrupting substances;
- substances that are impacting populations or environments that may be at increased risk due to either greater exposure or greater susceptibility;
- substances with the potential to contribute to cumulative risks[1];
- very hazardous substances that are capable of long-range transport (VH-LRT);
- substances with known hazardous properties that are used in products available to consumers; and
- potential substitutes for substances with known toxicity (for example substances that have been determined to be "toxic" under section 64 of CEPA, or that have been identified internationally as substances of concern).

Substances that are identified through multiple drivers are given higher priority for assessment. Where data is available to show that effects may be consistent within a class of substances, assessment of the class is prioritized. More information on the approach for prioritization is provided on the Identification and selection of priorities for assessment under CEPA web page.

[1] The consideration of cumulative effects under CEPA may involve an analysis, characterization, and possible quantification of the combined risks to human health or the environment from exposure to multiple chemicals.

In addition to the drivers identified above, any person may request under section 76 that the Ministers assess a substance. When a request is received, the Ministers evaluate the request and decide whether to add the substance to the Plan. The list of substances prioritized for assessment is provided below. Substances added to the list through the public request mechanism under section 76 of CEPA are marked with an asterisk (*). Substances that are already listed on Schedule 1 of CEPA but are prioritized for further risk characterization are marked with two asterisks (**). Each item on the list may include multiple chemicals or subgroups, and assessment of each of these priorities may result in one or more publications. To reflect a flexible approach, the list of prioritized substances may be amended from time to time using a public consultation process. Amendments could include the addition of new priorities identified through the public request mechanism or the emergence of new information, such as new science or use data, Indigenous knowledge, stakeholders' considerations or international initiatives.

2.1 Substances prioritized for assessment

Specific substances [including CAS Registry Number (CAS RN)]

- 1,3,4,6,7,8-Hexahydro-4,6,6,7,8,8-hexamethyl-cyclopenta[g]-2-benzopyran (HHCB; CAS RN 1222-05-5)
- Apigenin (CAS RN 520-36-5)
- Dichloromethane** (DCM; CAS RN 75-09-2)
- Methylene blue (CAS RN 61-73-4)
- Nanoscale silver (nano-Ag; CAS RN 7440-22-4)
- Nanoscale zinc oxide (nano-ZnO; CAS RN 1314-13-2)
- N,N-Dimethyl-p-toluidine (DMPT; CAS RN 99-97-8)
- Octocrylene (CAS RN 6197-30-4)
- Phosphine oxide, diphenyl(2,4,6-trimethylbenzoyl)- (PODP; CAS RN 75980-60)
- Quercetin (CAS RN 117-39-5)
- Styrene (CAS RNs 98-83-9 and 100-42-5)
- Tetrachloroethylene** (PERC; CAS RN 127-18-4)
- Trichloroethylene** (TCE; CAS RN 79-01-6)
- Trimethylolpropane triacrylate (TMPTA; CAS RN 15625-89-5)

Certain substances within the following groups

- 1,4-Benzenediamine, N-(1,3-dimethylbutyl)-N'-phenyl- (6PPD)*, its transformation products (notably 6PPD-quinone), and related p-phenylenediamines (PPDs)
- Alkylbenzene sulfonates (ABS) and derivatives
- Alkylphenols
- Bisphenol A structural analogs and functional alternatives (BPA SAFA)
- Coumarins
- Fluoropolymers
- Hydroxybenzophenones
- Nanoscale forms of titanium dioxide (nano-TiO_2)
- Oil sands process-affected water (OSPW), including naphthenic acids (NAs)*
- Organic flame retardants (OFRs)
- Pharmaceutical substances

- Quaternary ammonium compounds (QACs)
- Salicylates
- Terpenes of concern (TOC)
- Vetiver oils
- Xylenes

More details on these priorities, including rationales for their selection and a list identifying the specific substances being considered for inclusion in the various assessments, along with timelines for initiating these assessments, are available in the work plan on the Plan of Priorities: substances prioritized for assessment under CEPA web page. The work plan will be amended periodically to update expected timelines for when work may begin, reflect new or completed priorities, and refine the substances considered within a group or a subgroup in cases where information collected through the assessment process impacts the scope of the assessment.

More details on identifying and prioritizing substances for assessment under CEPA is provided on the Identification and selection of priorities for assessment under CEPA web page.

3 Prioritized activities or initiatives that support the assessment, control or other management of risks to the environment or to human health posed by substances

3.1 Activities to inform assessment approaches and future prioritization

Assessments are becoming more complex, for example, with increasing global production rates of substances and complex product supply chains. Assessments and the prioritization of substances for assessment will continue to incrementally move, where the information is available, towards further consideration of a broader range of populations that may be disproportionately impacted, and of a broader range of risks (for example, endocrine disruption, carcinogenic impacts). This also includes consideration of cumulative effects from combined exposures to multiple chemicals, as well as implementation of new approach methods, use of non-animal test data and incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge. More information on assessment approaches is available on the Risk Assessment of Chemical Substances web page.

To support future prioritization of substances and assessment activities, additional scoping may be conducted on various substances or topics of potential concern. This can involve the development of an approach or action plan, which may be published for consultation.

Additional information on prioritized activities or initiatives related to topics of concern for assessing risks to the environment or human health posed by substances is available on the Identification and selection of priorities for assessment under CEPA web page.

3.2 Core risk management activities

The Government administers over 200 risk management instruments already in place for many substances determined to pose a risk to human health and/or the environment, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), asbestos, mercury, perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), volatile organic compounds

(such as formaldehyde, benzene) and certain flame retardants, and will continue to administer these risk management instruments on a priority basis (for example, permitting requirements). New risk management priorities are added every time a substance is added to Schedule 1 of CEPA. The Government conducts risk management activities, which includes the decision-making process to identify, evaluate, select and implement actions to reduce risks to human health and the environment from toxic substances. These activities include:

- selecting the most appropriate action or suite of actions to reduce exposure to toxic substances, whether under CEPA, using voluntary measures such as an Environmental Performance Agreement, or another Act best suited to address the risk (for example, the *Canada Consumer Product Safety Act*, the *Food and Drugs Act*, the *Fisheries Act*, and others);
- consulting the public and stakeholders on risk management options under consideration;
- undertaking cost-benefit analysis, and evaluating the impacts on stakeholders;
- promoting compliance by providing information to industry and other polluters to increase awareness and understanding of requirements, and enforcing risk management instruments prioritized based on risks to human health and the environment and the likelihood of non-compliance; and
- evaluating and reporting on the ongoing relevance, success, and effectiveness of risk management actions that have been put in place.

When regulations are selected as a risk management tool, they are developed in accordance with legislative requirements set out in CEPA and with respect to direction by the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada to mitigate the administrative burden that regulations impose on businesses. The list of risk management activities and initiatives in progress or planned can be found on the Risk management of chemical substances web page and in the Chemicals Management Plan risk management actions table.

3.3 New risk management activities

Environment and Climate Change Canada and Health Canada will consider new and expanded risk management activities and initiatives such as:

Giving priority to prohibition for certain toxic substances

The amendments to CEPA created a strengthened regime for assessing and controlling certain toxic substances that are persistent and bioaccumulative, or that meet criteria for carcinogenicity, mutagenicity, and reproductive toxicity (CMR), or substances that pose the highest risk (SHR). Substances that are determined to be toxic under CEPA and that meet these criteria must be recommended for addition to Part 1 of Schedule 1 of CEPA.

For substances added to Part 1 of Schedule 1, the Minister of Environment and Minister of Health are required to give priority to the total, partial, or conditional prohibition of activities in relation to those substances or releases of those substances. In some cases, giving priority to prohibition will involve requiring the substance(s) to be phased out entirely. In other cases, it means that activities or releases of concern will be prohibited, or that all new uses will be prohibited unless it can be shown that there are no safer alternatives and that the use of the substances can be undertaken safely.

The criteria for these substances are, or will be, set out in regulations. The criteria for persistence and bioaccumulation are set out in the *Persistence and Bioaccumulation Regulations*. The criteria for CMR

and SHR will be described in a discussion document published alongside a notice in the *Canada Gazette, Part I,* and will be set out in new regulations. These new regulations would be developed in consultation with stakeholders and partners.

Permitting regime for existing substances

Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada could develop regulations to outline a new permitting regime for toxic substances. These regulations would support CEPA's strengthened chemicals management regime and would enable the federal government to issue a permit to allow the use of a toxic substance if it is demonstrated that a restricted activity can be undertaken safely and that there are no feasible alternatives.

This new regime would be a flexible and responsive authorization pathway that provides stakeholders with a clear and predictable science-based mechanism to maintain access to essential substances, while managing risk without the need for a complete prohibition. A permitting regime could enable quicker decision-making in response to evolving science, innovation, and real-world conditions—supporting business continuity while driving progress toward safer alternatives.

Disclosure of substances in products

Following the Notice of Intent published on October 29, 2022, to support increased protection and safety along the supply chain and to inform decisions by governments, businesses, consumers and waste handlers, Environment and Climate Change Canada could launch a strategy for enhancing disclosure of substances in products.

Addressing geographically-targeted areas of pollution

As the Government advances its efforts to protect the environment, communities, and populations that are disproportionately impacted by pollution, Environment and Climate Change Canada and Health Canada could further explore and consider geographically-targeted areas of pollution.

3.4 Research, monitoring and surveillance activities

Research, monitoring and surveillance provide essential information about chemicals, including how we may be exposed to them and their potential effects on human health and the environment. This knowledge informs decision-making on risk assessment and risk management priorities and helps keep pace with emerging scientific methods and information (such as research activities undertaken by government scientists and academic partners). These activities also support the identification and selection of priorities.

Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada scientists actively collaborate with domestic and international partners and support chemical-related programs, such as the Global Atmospheric Passive Sampling Network, as well as reporting obligations to fulfill international agreements on transboundary pollution. Researchers in both departments also play an active role in international chemicals management initiatives (for example, through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the World Health Organization. This helps Canada keep pace with understanding the changes in the global chemicals landscape and ensures the strategic advancement of

research, monitoring and surveillance priorities to protect the health of people living in Canada and the environment.

Research activities can help identify the hazardous properties of a substance, better understand its fate in the environment, and how humans or the environment may be exposed and how they may be affected.

Priority areas for research include:

- studying the persistence, bioavailability, bioaccumulation, toxicity and cumulative effects of priority chemicals and chemicals of emerging concern, including chemicals impacting populations or environments that may be at increased risk due to either greater exposure or greater susceptibility;
- understanding the impacts of chemicals on Indigenous Peoples and their communities;
- understanding the impacts of chemicals on low-income communities in Canada;
- bridging science knowledge gaps and informing risk assessments of new and existing chemicals of potential risk (for example, potential substitutes for substances with known toxicity and endocrine disruptors) in priority areas (such as human health effects, and routes and sources of exposure);
- generating and integrating knowledge to support the increasingly complex priorities faced by risk assessment and risk management, such as cumulative effects and real-world exposure to complex mixtures, and to support bridging, braiding and weaving Indigenous Knowledge and western science;
- where data and information are available, examining the interconnection between climate change and the exposure of ecosystems and human populations to harmful chemicals, (particularly due to extreme weather events, which can mobilize contaminants from industrial sites, agricultural runoff or damaged infrastructure), and developing solutions for effective, adaptable, resilient risk management to mitigate chemical exposures;
- developing new computational and laboratory methodologies that allow a greater number and variety of chemicals to be studied, including those for which little is known (for example, development of methods to expand the list of chemicals, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), that can be identified and quantified in various matrices); and
- enabling modern toxicity testing, including advancing the use of new approach methods (NAMs) (such as new technologies, methodologies or approaches (or a combination thereof, such as computational or cell culture models) to support reducing animal testing), where possible, to further the understanding of how environmental exposures lead to negative health impacts.

Spotlight: Supporting the Health of Firefighters

Health Canada is implementing the firefighter action plan to protect firefighters from harmful chemicals released during household fires. This includes conducting research and monitoring to evaluate firefighters' chemical exposure levels. Additionally, Health Canada will support research on occupational cancers linked to firefighting. Through the new National Framework on Cancers Linked to Firefighting, the department will build evidence on firefighter subpopulations and develop best practices for interventions to reduce and prevent harmful exposures.

Spotlight: Integrated Chemical Mixtures Project

The Integrated Chemical Mixtures Project (ICMP) is a research and monitoring project established as part of the implementation of the amended CEPA. Over a period of four years, commencing in 2023-24, research and monitoring activities will be conducted to generate knowledge on real-world exposure to, and effects from, chemical mixtures in the environment.

The goal of the ICMP is to develop an innovative approach to evaluate and address exposure to multiple substances and their cumulative impacts on multiple environmental media, including air, biota, water, sediment, and soil. The ICMP will focus on two site case studies as a proof of concept. Engagement with impacted Indigenous communities, industries, municipalities, and provincial partners is a pillar of the project.

Monitoring and surveillance activities measure and track chemicals in various environmental media, humans, and food sources, as well as in wastewater. These activities inform risk assessment and risk management program priorities and decisions and, to the extent possible, verify if risk management measures are meeting their intended objectives.

Health Canada's human biomonitoring program is dedicated to advancing the understanding of environmental chemical exposures in people living in Canada and supporting informed decision-making. The framework that guides program activities includes the following key components:

- population biomonitoring, which encompasses both national and targeted biomonitoring to provide representative and comprehensive biomonitoring data on people living in Canada, including those who may be disproportionately impacted;
- consideration of barriers to, and opportunities for the engagement of marginalized, racialized and disproportionately impacted people and communities in future activities;
- the development and application of methods to measure indicators of exposure and biological change for existing priority substances as well as emerging priorities; and
- data analysis to better understand chemical exposures and associated health effects in people living in Canada, and knowledge dissemination to communicate findings to a diverse range of stakeholders, including groups and individuals who may be disproportionately impacted (for example, due to greater susceptibility or greater exposure, due to economic disparity, or as a result of climate change).

Examples of planned and ongoing activities for Health Canada's monitoring and surveillance program include the biomonitoring component of the Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS). This survey has collected nationally representative biomonitoring data since 2007, and reports on the levels of environmental chemicals for the Canadian population, disaggregated by age and sex. These data enable the establishment of baseline levels of chemicals to help assess changes in exposure over time. The program also supports human health research and biomonitoring under the Northern Contaminants Program (NCP) whose key objective is 'to work towards reducing, and, where possible, eliminating contaminants in traditional/country foods, while providing information that assists individuals and communities in making informed decisions about their food use. In addition, the program leads the Maternal-Infant Research on Environmental Chemicals (MIREC) study, which collects data over time from the same parents and children to examine the effects of prenatal exposure to environmental

chemicals on health outcomes at several critical life stages, including pregnancy, infancy, childhood, puberty and menopause. Health Canada's biomonitoring programs are always exploring new methods to advance the collection, analysis and interpretation of biomonitoring data. Other activities that may support the identification of disproportionately impacted populations include site-specific analysis of existing CHMS data, leveraging existing Canadian biobanks, and using novel tools, such as artificial intelligence, to support our understanding of real-world chemical exposures. Efforts are also underway to explore additional sources of data and linkages between various data sets, where possible and with relevant partners. Information on human biomonitoring activities under Canada's CMP is available on the Human Biomonitoring of Environmental Chemicals webpage.

Health Canada also conducts surveillance of chemical contaminants in foods through the Canadian Total Diet Study. In addition, Health Canada performs targeted surveys when trends of concern are identified and leverages other surveillance programs such as the Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program.

Environment and Climate Change Canada's Environmental Monitoring and Surveillance Program enables the regular collection of data on the concentration of chemical substances and monitoring of trends in various environmental media across Canada. Environmental media include surface water, sediment, air, aquatic biota and wildlife. Sampling sites are selected based on data needs for decision-making, while leveraging existing monitoring programs. In addition, as many chemical substances are found in consumer products, the wastewater sector is also of interest for the monitoring of chemical substances. Through the Chemicals Management Plan Wastewater Monitoring Program, Environment and Climate Change Canada scientists can determine the levels of selected chemical substances entering wastewater treatment plants, the fate of these substances through typical wastewater and sludge treatment processes, and the levels of these substances being discharged in wastewater treatment plant effluents and solids residuals.

Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada have a governance process for research and monitoring activities to ensure related efforts support risk assessment and risk management priorities. These priorities guide competitive internal calls for research proposals as well as external calls for research proposals funded through grants and contributions. Results and findings from these research and monitoring projects are shared with regulatory communities on an ongoing basis and can inform the identification of new priorities and emerging issues for risk assessment and risk management. Results are also shared more broadly and reported on through various means of knowledge transfer, including publications, presentations, workshops, and publications on the Open Government Portal Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada scientists are uniquely positioned to communicate scientific data that is impartial, evidence-informed, and expert-driven, and that is responsive to the needs of people in Canada and to share it in ways that are accessible, useable, nimble and adaptive.

Progress made on research, monitoring and surveillance activities to address risk assessment and risk management needs and priorities have been and will continue to be reported in the CEPA Annual Report.

3.5 Information gathering

Activities and initiatives to collect information from stakeholders

Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada plan to develop information gathering initiatives on substances that may be related to their import, manufacture, product concentration and uses.

Information to support the prioritization, assessment and risk management of substances can be collected from a variety of published and unpublished sources, stakeholder submissions, and various databases, either through mandatory or voluntary means.

Mandatory information gathering initiatives (section 46 or 71 notices under CEPA) provide authority for the collection of scientific data (such as toxicological studies) and commercial activity information (such as substance uses and quantities) from stakeholders such as importers, manufacturers, and users of chemicals who meet the reporting requirements.

The plan describing anticipated upcoming information gathering initiatives as well as past efforts is available on the Information Gathering Initiatives webpage.

The National Pollutant Release Inventory

The National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) is Canada's public inventory of pollutant releases, disposals and transfers. It tracks over 300 pollutants from over 7,000 facilities across Canada. Under the authority of CEPA, the NPRI tracks pollutants from facilities across Canada subject to the reporting requirements by collecting information about substances that may pose a risk to the environment and health.

The list of substances subject to reporting has been and will continue to be reviewed to ensure that it remains up-to-date and relevant, and that reporting thresholds are appropriate for gathering pollutant release data in Canada to meet the needs of internal government programs and other data users. This will continue to involve reviewing activities such as risk assessment and risk management to inform possible changes to the NPRI substance list. The program will also continue to leverage the regular feedback provided by stakeholders through its external multi-stakeholder advisory working group. Changes may include the addition of substances that meet the definition of toxic as set out in CEPA, the deletion of substances for which an NPRI listing is no longer warranted, and threshold changes where current reporting on a substance is not adequate to meet current needs. Important collaborations with neighbouring jurisdictions will also continue to inform data collection and analysis for the benefit of people living in Canada.

3.6 Information sharing

The Watch List

Section 75.1 of the amended CEPA enacts that the Minister of the Environment must compile and may amend from time to time a list that specifies substances that the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health have reason to suspect are capable of becoming toxic or that have been determined to be capable of becoming toxic. This list is known as the Watch List. Substances listed on Schedule 1 of CEPA cannot appear on the Watch List.

The Watch List will include substances that have been assessed as not currently meeting the criteria for toxic under section 64 of CEPA but may be of potential concern if, for instance, new data on exposure or hazard emerged, or exposure levels were to change in the future. The Watch List will not impose new or

additional requirements or restrictions on a substance or class of substances and does not supersede or modify any Act, regulation or legal obligation. Environment and Climate Change Canada and Health Canada published a proposed Watch List Approach for a 60-day comment period, outlining how the two departments would meet the legislated requirement of compiling and amending the Watch List. The Approach describes the considerations and processes by which substances can be added and removed from the Watch List.

The development of the Approach will consider public comments and will be published in the CEPA Registry in 2025, with Watch List substances to be published in the CEPA Registry soon thereafter. Amendments to the Watch List will be an ongoing activity.

Additional information on substances and risks

For further information on substances and risk communication, we invite you to consult the following websites:

- Substances Search tool – an online searchable tool to look up substance names and substance identifiers that are referenced in various legislative or regulatory instruments or Government of Canada websites. The information conveyed through the tool will continue to be updated and expanded to include a broader scope of information on substances
- Chemical substances – identifies ongoing activities related to this Plan. Updates include the publication of new content, such as substance information sheets and risk assessment fact sheets on various topics
- Toxic Substances – communicates science-based information on toxic substances in plain language and the actions taken by the Government of Canada to address toxic substances
- Healthy Home – Health Canada's platform for disseminating information to the public on how to manage and reduce exposure to chemicals and pollutants in and around the home. Part of the Healthy Home campaign is a searchable list of chemicals and pollutants that provides plain language information about the related health effects of specific chemical risks and how to reduce these risks. The list will continue to be expanded to include new high profile priority chemicals

Improving digital systems

Environment and Climate Change Canada is improving digital systems to make it easier and faster for people in Canada to engage with our regulatory work. Future enhancements will seek to help the Government obtain, use and share environmental data more effectively, supporting better decision-making and keeping people in Canada informed.

3.7 Engagement activities

The Government of Canada will continue to engage with the public, civil society organizations, academics, Indigenous partners, industry, and other jurisdictions that represent a breadth of perspectives, sectors, and interests spanning across the life cycle of substances.

This engagement will leverage the knowledge and expertise of these parties and diverse voices through targeted and tailored mechanisms to provide input and advice on program implementation and decision-making. Such mechanisms may include:

- multi-stakeholder and ad-hoc science workshops that focus on topics of emerging science and risk assessment modernization;
- tailored bilateral meetings with civil society organizations, industry groups and Indigenous organizations;
- partnerships with well-placed intermediaries, such as public health organizations, to help increase the reach and accessibility of risk communications, and to bring a wider breadth of voices into the program;
- partnerships and culturally appropriate distinctions-based dialogue with Indigenous partners to support the meaningful inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and knowledge;
- contribution funding to support enhanced participation of Indigenous partners and civil society organizations;
- public comment periods to inform proposed risk assessments, consultation documents and risk management documents; and
- the ongoing expansion and improvement of the Healthy Home campaign, which is the Chemicals Management Plan's platform for disseminating information to the public on how to manage and reduce exposure to chemicals and pollutants in and around the home, in order to engage the public and non-traditional stakeholders.

Engagement activities will continue to focus on a shift towards the participation and perspectives of populations who may be disproportionately impacted by chemicals, as well as on efforts to advance the right of every individual in Canada to a healthy environment as provided for in CEPA.

Participation in international chemicals management activities

International collaboration will help drive change globally (with other governments, industry, intergovernmental organizations) for sound chemicals and waste management. The Government intends to continue to play a role in bilateral and multilateral fora where there are linkages to chemicals management and environmental and human health protection.

Considering Canada's commitments under the World Trade Organization Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade[2] and the value of regulatory alignment, the Government seeks to reduce barriers to trade and help provide Canadian exporters with more secure, predictable access to foreign markets for their products.

Work is ongoing to explore opportunities to advance informed substitution domestically and internationally. Policy levers to support the identification, development, and use of safer or more sustainable alternatives for substances already in commerce that are associated with substitution challenges are being identified and considered.

The Government of Canada plans to continue to implement its obligations under Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and actively participate in meetings of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm, and Minamata Conventions and the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution. Canada will continue to explore and engage in a broad range of activities aimed at promoting the

[2] WTO | Technical Barriers to Trade

ratification and effective implementation of international agreements related to protecting human health and the environment. This includes supporting the listing of chemicals under the Stockholm Convention, as well as advancing global efforts to phase out or regulate harmful substances, strengthen pollution control measures, and enhance cooperation on chemical and waste management. In addition, Canada will continue to participate in international frameworks such as the Global Framework on Chemicals, and activities addressing chemicals management under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Trade Organization and the G7. Canada will also address impacts of chemicals and waste on biodiversity, both internationally through the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and domestically, as described in Canada's 2030 Nature Strategy: Halting and Reversing Biodiversity Loss in Canada.

4 Activities or initiatives that promote the development and incorporation of alternative methods and strategies to replace, reduce or refine vertebrate animal testing

A strategy has been developed to guide Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada efforts to replace, reduce or refine the use of vertebrate animals for the purposes of assessing substances under CEPA. A Notice of Intent regarding the development of this strategy was published on November 30, 2023, and a draft strategy was published for a 60-day public comment on September 14, 2024. The Strategy, published on the CEPA Registry, reflects feedback received through comments and public consultation.

5 Amendments to the Plan

To ensure stakeholders and partners are kept up-to-date and to ensure predictability, transparency and flexibility to accommodate shifts in Government priorities and resources, proposed updates to the Plan will be communicated through the latest news mailouts, supporting web pages, or the *Canada Gazette*. Consultation and engagement with stakeholders and partners will be conducted as updates are made to the Plan.

5.1 Stay updated on the latest news

Stakeholders, partners and members of the public who are interested in being notified of actions being taken by the Government to assess and manage substances are invited to subscribe for the latest news on the Chemicals Management Plan. In addition, the CMP produces a quarterly mail-out to stakeholders and partners. For additional details, refer to Engaging in Risk Management and Making Information Available. Stakeholders, partners and members of the public who would like to receive CMP Publication Plans by email can contact: substances@ec.gc.ca.

5.2 Contact

Inquiries on the Plan of Priorities can be sent by email to substances@ec.gc.ca.