

Monitoring, management, and oversight critical for responsible shale gas development

1 May 2014

A new expert panel report, Environmental Impacts of Shale Gas Extraction in Canada, concludes that shale gas development must be supported by well-targeted science and management strategies to understand and mitigate potential impacts. The report, released today by the Council of Canadian Academies, addresses environmental and associated health impacts and offers insights regarding public engagement and trust.

Shale gas is leading an energy boom which is having profound economic, environmental, and social impacts across much of North America. Shale gas has been characterized as an energy "game changer" because it is abundant, often close to major markets, and relatively inexpensive to produce. As the world's third-largest natural gas producer, fourth-largest exporter, and possessing vast shale gas resources of its own, Canada has a major stake in this new source of energy.

"For Canada, regional context matters. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work to address the various potential environmental impacts that may exist across Canada's diverse regions," said Elizabeth Dowdeswell, President of the Council of Canadian Academies. "As such, communities and decision-makers will need to consider potential environmental impacts within their own contexts and decision-making processes."

The Panel's [report](#) sheds light on a variety of potential environmental impacts associated with well integrity; groundwater and surface water; [greenhouse gas emissions](#); land impacts and seismic events; and human health. The report also addresses the importance baseline and ongoing monitoring, and the need for research and data-gathering.

The Expert Panel was not asked to conduct a

safety assessment, determine the economic feasibility of [shale gas](#) development, or compare energy sources. The report provides a comprehensive examination of potential impacts and insights on how best to mitigate them. Environment Canada's foresight in requesting this examination provides governments, industry, and other stakeholders with an in-depth resource for considering future Canadian development.

More information:

www.scienceadvice.ca/en/assess...leted/shale-gas.aspx

Provided by Council of Canadian Academies

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