

## **Environmental Review Policy**

### **Mitacs Policy Statement on Environmental Review**

Mitacs will ensure that the programs it supports and any research conducted therewith promote sustainable development and are conducted in a way that respects and protects the environment. To do this, Mitacs is committed to paying careful attention to environmental considerations in program award decisions. Ultimate responsibility for environmental considerations rests with the Mitacs Board of Directors which may, at its discretion, assign this duty to a subcommittee. Mitacs management believes that this policy is pursuant to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA).

### **Policy Goals**

- \* Mitacs will ensure that all program applications disclose any potential environmental effects due to the proposed research activities.
- \* Environmental assessments should be conducted as early as possible in the planning stage of a designated project in order for the proponent to be able to consider the analysis in the proposed plans, including incorporation of mitigation measures to address adverse environmental effects.
- \* Applicants should make every effort to have environmental assessments completed before proposal submission to Mitacs. Any funding awarded will be pending the results of such assessments.
- \* For any proposed research work that potentially has adverse effects on the environment, Mitacs will not release funds in support of the research project unless it is satisfied that appropriate monitoring and mitigation measures are in place to address these impacts.
- \* Program participants must inform Mitacs of any changes in their research work and the potential environmental effects of such changes. Funding for the research may be halted if the revised proposal receives an unsatisfactory environmental assessment, or if it is discovered that participants have not complied with this regulation.

### **Review Process**

Potential program participants will carry out a self-assessment of the environmental impact of the research work when applying to Mitacs programs. Applicants should declare any research activities that may have significant potential impact on the environment and in such cases provide evidence that the appropriate environmental protection procedures are in place, e.g. provisions for the treatment of effluent or disposal of hazardous waste.

Applications to all Mitacs programs are subject to internal review by Mitacs staff, and applications to some Mitacs programs are also subject to external peer review. In the latter case, external reviewers of Mitacs applications will also be asked to assess the environmental impact of the research. Internal reviewer(s) and external reviewer(s) of an

application may choose to recommend that Mitacs conduct an additional independent environmental assessment.

The subsequent level of response by Mitacs will depend on the result of the assessment by the reviewer(s). If an additional independent environmental assessment is not required, the subsequent review by Mitacs staff will be straightforward and should not result in any delays in the processing of the application. However, if further evaluation is deemed necessary, the proposal will be sent to the Mitacs Board of Directors, which has the responsibility to call for a formal assessment of potential environmental effect. In order to carry out this role, the Board will:

- \* Assess environmental impact in accordance with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.
- \* Establish controls to both monitor and mitigate the potentially negative impacts on the environment.
- \* Send any project proposal where the environmental impact is of concern to an external expert in environmental impact assessment.

Mitacs funds shall only be released to Mitacs program participants after their projects have undergone an environmental review and Mitacs has determined that no significant adverse effects on the environment are expected. Funding awards will be made conditional on a favorable environmental review.

If the Board determines that the proposed research project has a significant risk of adverse environmental impacts (i.e. possible adverse effects caused by a development, industrial, or infrastructural project or by the release of a substance in the environment), the project will not be funded by Mitacs and will not be part of any Mitacs program. In such cases, the result of the environmental review and the Board's decision shall be communicated to the students and researchers involved, to the relevant universities, and to any partner organizations.