



Role of the Mackenzie River Basin Board

The purpose of the **Mackenzie River Basin Board** as set forth in the **Mackenzie River Basin Transboundary Waters Master Agreement** is to create a cooperative forum to inform about and advocate for the maintenance of the ecological integrity of the entire Mackenzie watershed.

The Board has a number of duties and responsibilities that are specified in the Master Agreement. The most important are:

- Providing a forum for communication, coordination, information exchange, notification and consultation.
- Considering the needs and concerns of Aboriginal people through,
 1. The provision of culturally appropriate communication, and
 2. The incorporation of their traditional knowledge and values.
- Recommending uniform objectives or guidelines for the quality and quantity of the water resources and encouraging consistent monitoring programs.
- Submitting to the Ministers a report on the State of the Aquatic Ecosystem within 5 years after the end of the first Fiscal Year and every 5 years thereafter.
- Administering the dispute resolution process contained in the Master Agreement.
- Monitoring the process of implementing the Bilateral Water Management Agreements.
- Identifying, recommending and implementing such studies, investigations, programs and activities as are required to carry out the Master Agreement.
- Reviewing the Master Agreement at least once every three years and proposing amendments to the Parties.
- Submitting an annual report to the Ministers.

The Board is not a regulatory or licensing board, and has no legal or policy basis to regulate resource use in any of the jurisdictions. However, the Board may influence regulatory decisions made in the various jurisdictions in a number of ways:

- By providing factual material, such as the State of the Aquatic Ecosystem Reports, to inform development decision makers.
- By participating in and influencing pre or post regulatory processes, such as planning, regional or cumulative environmental impact assessment processes, or ministerial reviews of sensitive decisions.
- By appearing as a “friend of the tribunal” in federal, provincial and territorial public hearings to advocate for the principles endorsed in the Master Agreement. The Agreement commits the parties to the following principles in carrying out their responsibilities in the Basin.
 1. Managing the water resources in a manner consistent with the maintenance of the ecological integrity of the aquatic ecosystem.
 2. Managing the use of the water resources in a sustainable manner for present and future generations.
 3. Allowing each Party to the Agreement to use or manage the use of water resources within its jurisdiction provided such does no unreasonable harm to the ecological integrity for the aquatic ecosystem in another jurisdiction.
 4. Providing for early and effective consultation, notification and sharing of information on developments and activities that might affect the ecological integrity of the aquatic ecosystem in another jurisdiction.

For more information and copies of the Mackenzie River Basin Transboundary Waters Master Agreement, contact:

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