

Environmental Assessment and the Blue Economy

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THE BLUE ECONOMY... IS?

Canada freshwater resources

Think about 20% and 7%; but more than half flows away from where most Canadians live.

We **think** we have abundant water for...

- Cultural and social values
- Transportation
- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Food
- Energy
- Recreation
- Clean safe drinking water
- As a place to put wastes



THE BLUE ECONOMY... ISSUES

Climate change

Pollution

Quality

Quantity

Uncertainty

Can we create and implement proactive policy?

The need for holistic and integrative thinking

Barriers to policy innovation

How can environmental assessment help? Or can it?



THE BLUE ECONOMY CONCEPT

- Nordic Origins
- Blue Adapt
- Developing collaborative research
- **Bio Economy** (a forest based economy requires a specific set of policies, laws, regulations and tools; focused on an ecological system)
- **Blue Economy** (also requires such a focus)
- Practices for governance and approaches to regulation to support the sustainability and resilience of water ecosystems, and the coupled social economic systems that rely on them.



APPROACHES AND TOOLS

- **Better use of ecological data and information on water ecosystems**
- **Developing novel ecological models to create predictive understanding of riverine, lacustrine, and marine and coastal systems.**
- **Understand societal, economic, legal and environmental linkages and dependencies.**
- **Create regulatory models to enable timely, efficient and effective responses to new environmental information, and to change.**
- **Create integrative knowledge and integrative governance systems.**



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & THE BLUE ECONOMY

How can the impacts of human activities on ecosystem resilience and adaptation be predicted?

How can managing transition better support adaptation and sustainable *blue* growth?

What legal and economic tools promote and limit the development of sustainable blue growth?

How can we best integrate scientific knowledge, traditional knowledge, innovation, and cooperation to support an adaptive governance framework?



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT POTENTIALS

Does a resource-focused assessment model make sense, and how implementable would it be in the Canadian setting?

Does a foundation exist?

- **Strategic approaches to assessing impacts**
- **Project and class based experience**
- **Promising foundations in regional assessments and regional studies**
- **Emerging capacity and experience in cumulative effects assessment**
- **Could Indigenous led assessment provide a more component-based approach?**

The Nordic experience sees environmental assessment as a tool nested within a larger policy setting and supporting sector-based objectives.





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