

August 18, 1998

Our File: P-94-4011

Christine Guay
Director
Federal-Provincial Relations Branch
Environment Canada
Terrasses de la Chaudière
23rd Floor, 10 Wellington Street
Hull, Quebec K1A 0H3

Dear Ms. Guay:

RE: Canada-Wide Harmonization Accord – Consultation on Stakeholder Participation

Further to your letter dated August 10, 1998, which was received August 14, 1998, we wish to express our dismay and disappointment in this “consultation” process. We find that this process has been poorly conceived and delivered and offers no assurances that the time and effort that stakeholders put into the process will yield any tangible results.

We find particularly objectionable the severely limited timelines imposed on stakeholders for participation in this project and the broadening of focus partway through the process to include public accountability without provision for all stakeholders to participate. In our previous comments provided to you in June, we raised concerns about the short time for review and comment. At this stage, we find this is even more of a concern. It is wholly unreasonable that we and other stakeholders should be expected to review and meaningfully comment on as significant a matter as this in a few days. We also find it wholly unacceptable that CCME chose to add public accountability into the process without giving all stakeholders an opportunity to provide initial comments on the matter. The way in which it has been handled certainly taints whatever results you claim to have achieved.

With respect to the draft annex, we find that its development process has been so flawed that it would be a meaningless exercise to comment on it in detail. We do note that the comments on “individual government accountability” and “legal accountability” are rather misleading. Statements about ability of the jurisdictions to act freely under the Accord do not seem to concur with the provisions of the Accord itself, which seek to limit actions that governments can take on matters governed by sub-Agreements and do not provide for default positions that place environmental protection as the uppermost goal. The material on stakeholder participation does not establish concrete strategies that can be used to involve stakeholders. Rather, this material seems to be a compilation of “motherhood” statements worded in such a vague fashion as to enable governments to choose to undertake no stakeholder involvement and justify such a course of action under the draft annex. We feel that the flaws of this consultation process have placed us in a

position where we cannot participate in a productive manner, and thus we offer no input beyond these general comments.

We suggest that CCME begin the consultation process anew and undertake a sincere effort to produce a well-reasoned, effective document that is representative of all stakeholders, rather than rely upon a poorly designed and executed process that will meet political timelines but achieve no results of value.

Yours truly,

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