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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Environment  
Environmental Assessment Office

### **New agreement streamlines approval process in the oil and gas sector**

VICTORIA – A new Memorandum of Understanding will streamline environmental assessments and permitting for liquefied natural gas projects by reducing duplication and improving timeliness.

The BC Oil and Gas Commission and the Environmental Assessment Office regulate many of the same projects in the oil and gas sector. By co-ordinating their work and sharing information, the two agencies will manage a single, predictable regulatory regime for LNG projects, from inception through closure.

“Under this memorandum, the Environmental Assessment Office and the BC Oil and Gas Commission will work together to reduce duplication and shorten the time it takes to get an approved project up and running,” Environment Minister Mary Polak said. “At the same time, by strengthening compliance and enforcement efforts, they will maintain and even enhance environmental protection.”

Improvements include:

- Sharing information to eliminate the need for companies to submit the same reports to both agencies.
- Working with companies to identify opportunities for environmental assessments (Environmental Assessment Office) and permitting reviews (BC Oil and Gas Commission) to run concurrently, reducing the overall time required to authorize a project.
- Sharing information and attending meetings together to ensure a comprehensive and respectful approach to First Nations’ engagement.
- Joint inspections for a co-ordinated approach to compliance with environmental assessment certificate and permit conditions.

“Developing a globally competitive liquefied natural gas industry is a priority for our government,” Natural Gas Development Minister Rich Coleman said. “With these changes, we will ensure both a rigorous and timely review of applications in British Columbia.”

The BC Oil and Gas Commission and the Environmental Assessment Office will begin implementing the memorandum immediately, including communicating with the industry and others about the implications for current and future LNG developments in the province. A copy of the memorandum is available at: [http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca/EAO\\_OGC.html](http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca/EAO_OGC.html)

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