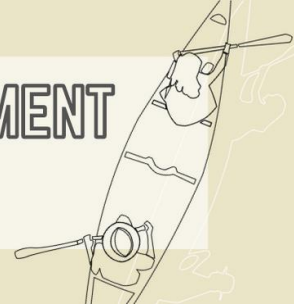


NAVIGATING THE LAW TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

ACCESSING LEGISLATIVE CHANGE: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



October 2020

Introduction: The following questions and sample answers have been provided to help facilitate discussions about accessing legislative change in Canada and the need for environmental justice advocacy promoting the development of more sustainable laws and policies.

1) What is legislation?

- Legislation is the written law elected politicians develop in Parliament (federal) or in a provincial or territorial Legislative Assembly.
- Legislation covers a broad range of topics that includes human rights, natural resource management, environmental assessment and the protection of human health.

2) What is legislative change?

- Legislative change occurs when elected members of Parliament or a provincial or territorial Legislative Assembly make changes to existing laws or create new laws.
- There are many reasons elected officials may consider legislative change such as new government policies, the need for new legal processes, and public pressure.
- Before a proposed change or new law receives final approval, it must first go through a number of steps, including: first reading, second reading, committee review, third reading, and royal assent.

3) Who influences legislative change in Canada?

- While elected politicians play an important role in the legislative branch of the government, there are also many unelected individuals who work for government (bureaucrats) who can directly influence legislative change in Canada.
- Members of the public can also play an influential role by exercising the democratic rights that give them the opportunity to have a say in the legislative changes that occur in their local communities and at the federal level.

4) Why is legislative change something Manitobans should care about?

- Changes to legislation through parliamentary and legislative processes can directly impact the way wild plant and animal species are protected, environmental impacts are assessed, water resources are managed, and natural resources are extracted. Such changes can impact the health of communities and the natural resources they depend on.

5) What can I do to create positive legislative change?

- Learn what's happening in your local Legislative Assembly and in Parliament.
- Exercise your democratic rights as a Canadian citizen and speak to your elected MLA or MP about the environmental issues that concern you or sign up to speak or submit written comments to a legislative or parliamentary committee about proposed legislative changes.

For more information see:

- [Accessing Legislative Change](#) (webinar)
- [Accessing Legislative Change: Additional Resources](#)
- [Accessing Legislative Change: Additional Questions](#)



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