

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

ST. LAWRENCE RIVER REGIONAL ASSESSMENT (SLRA)

Public Information Session

March 2025



Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

Canada

WHAT ARE REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS (RAs)

Studies conducted in areas of existing projects or anticipated development to inform planning and management of cumulative effects and project impact assessments.

RAs do not assess a single development proposal, but assess the potential effects of multiple (current and future) developments and activities in a geographic area.

Potential outcomes:

- Compilation of information, identification of gaps
- Description of potential effects
- Identification of recommendations (mitigation measures, priority interventions, enhancement measures...)
- Etc.

Sections 92 and 93 of *Impact Assessment Act* (IAC) authorize the Minister of Environment to conduct RAs of a particular region.

CONTEXT

In July 2020, Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) submitted a request to Minister of the Environment for the conduct of an RA of an area of the St. Lawrence River. In July 2021, the Minister decided to move forward with the SLRA.

In Fall 2024, the Minister authorized Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) to conduct the SLRA in accordance with par. 93(1)(a)(ii) of the IAA. IAAC decided to conduct the SLRA in partnership with MCK and other interested First Nations.

These proposed draft Terms of Reference were developed jointly by IAAC, MCK and other interested First Nations.

Seeking public comment until March 29, 2025. The comments/input received will be considered in the final Terms of Reference. Final Terms of Reference will be approved by Chiefs and by the Minister.

The assessment will begin once the Terms of Reference are approved



KEY MESSAGES

The RA's Terms of Reference must comply with the requirements of the *Impact Assessment Act* and respect federal-provincial jurisdiction.

RAs will assess changes to the environment and to health, social and economic conditions and the positive and negative consequences of these changes and not only consider “*adverse effects within federal jurisdiction*”.

RA is a factor that must be considered in project specific impact assessment; it serves to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of project specific impact assessment and to inform decision-making.

TERMS OF REFERENCE SECTIONS



GOALS

Gain deeper insights into the state of the St. Lawrence River

- *Particularly with regards to the relationships between targeted physical activities, historic and existing complementary activities, ecosystems and First Nations' rights and interests.*

Establish a set of baseline and targeted conditions within the assessment area which take into account both Indigenous knowledge and modern Western science.

Identify strategies for future projects and other efforts to achieve environmental and social gains in an efficient, collaborative manner.



OBJECTIVES

Regional context

Current positive and adverse effects of targeted physical activities and complementary activities

Cumulative effects

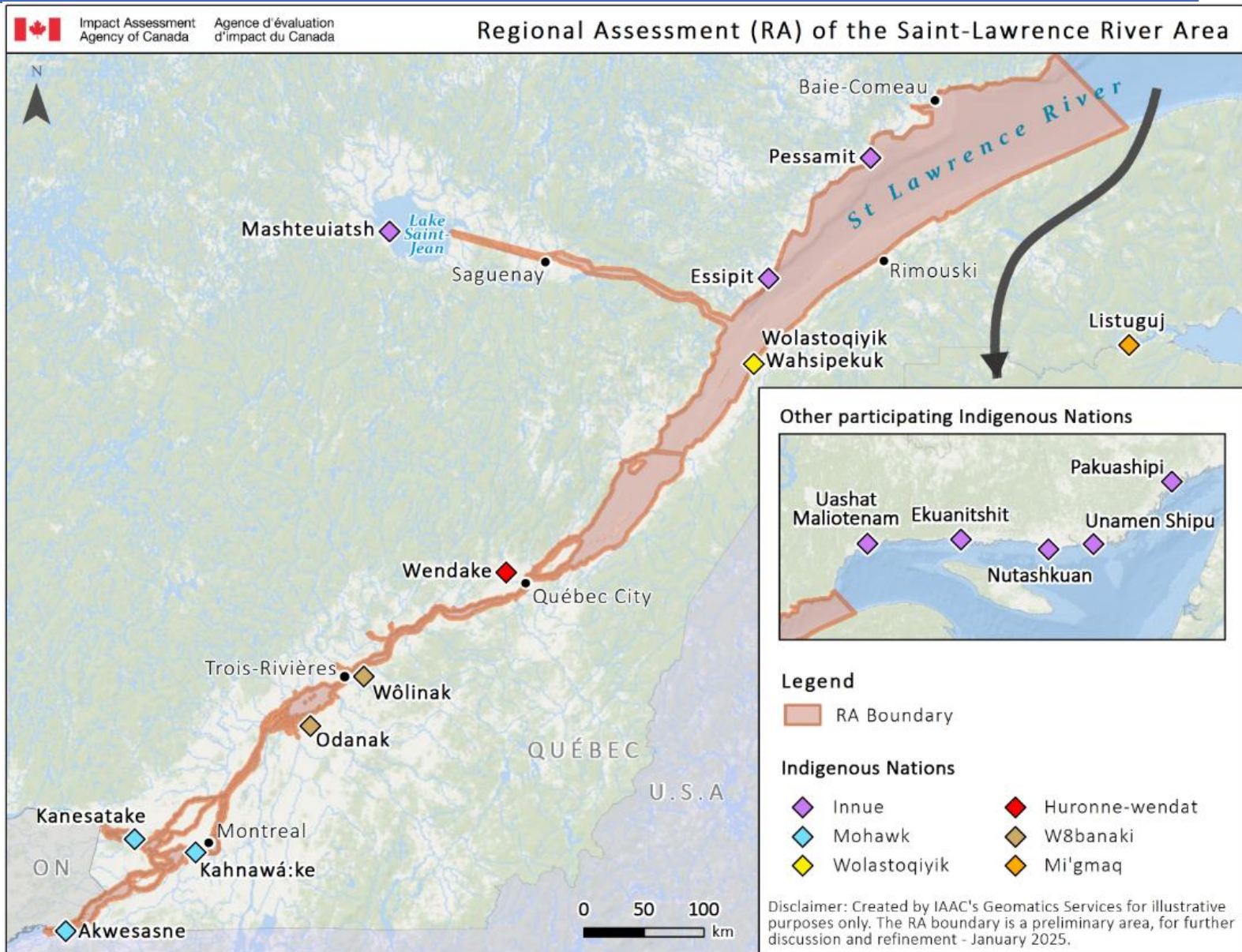
Gaps and opportunities to address them

Recommendations including priority interventions and enhancement measures

How recommendations could enhance effectiveness and efficiency of impact assessments



PROPOSED ASSESSMENT AREA



ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES

Changes to environment related to:

- Water quality and quantity;
- Air quality and Greenhouse gas emissions;
- Soil and sediment quality;
- Wildlife and wildlife habitat, including species at risk, migratory birds, and fish and fish habitat;
- Flora, including species at risk;
- Shoreline integrity;
- Sensitive and protected areas (existing and proposed).

Changes to health, social, cultural and economic conditions related to:

- Community well-being;
- River and shoreline uses;
- Activities.

Changes specific to Indigenous peoples:

- Rights and interests;
- Access and connection to lands and resources;
- Experience of the territory;
- Resource quantity, quality, sufficiency and food sovereignty;
- Artifacts and sites of archeological, cultural or ceremonial significance
- Intergenerational transmission



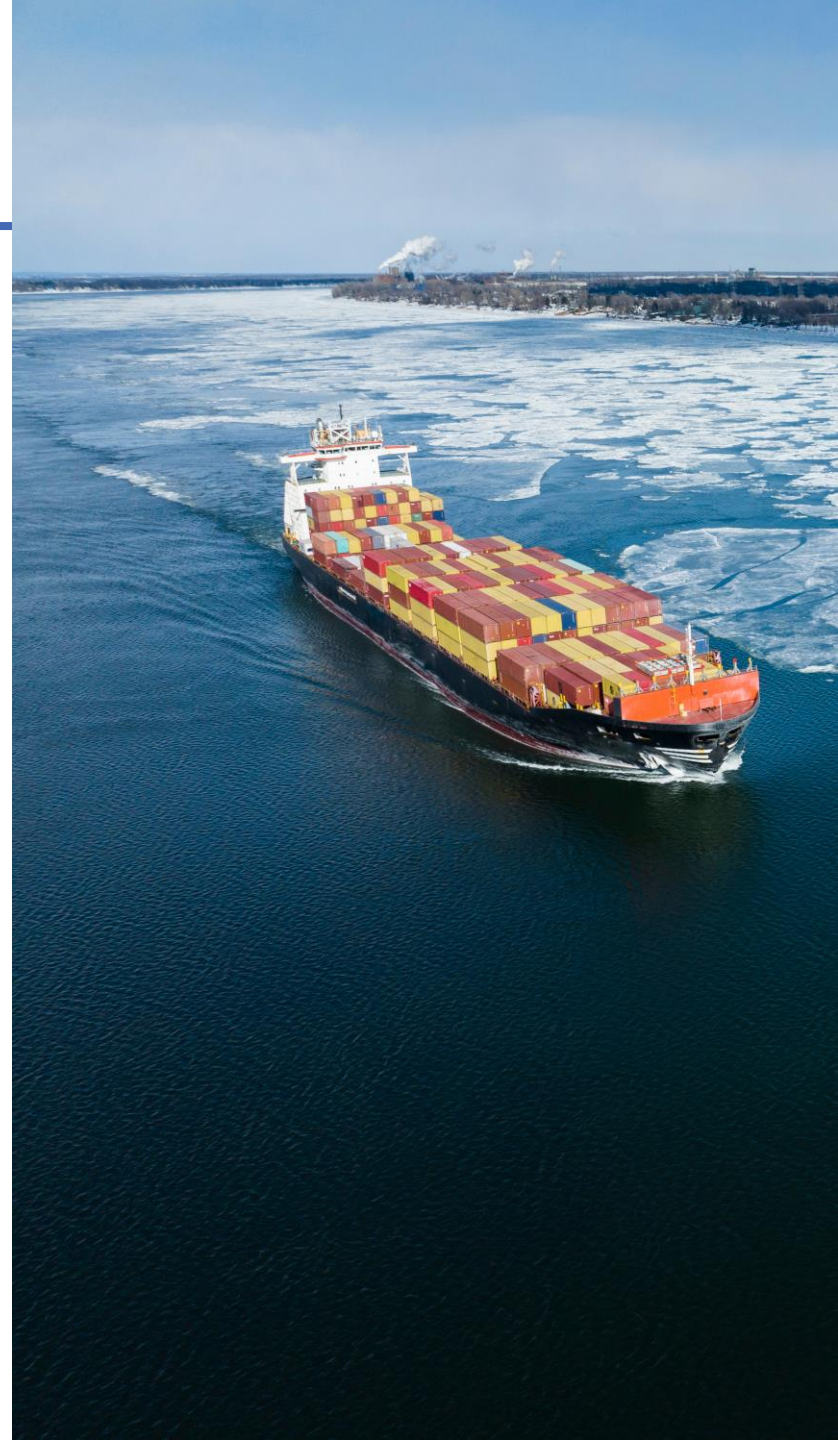
ACTIVITIES TO BE ASSESSED

Targeted Physical activities

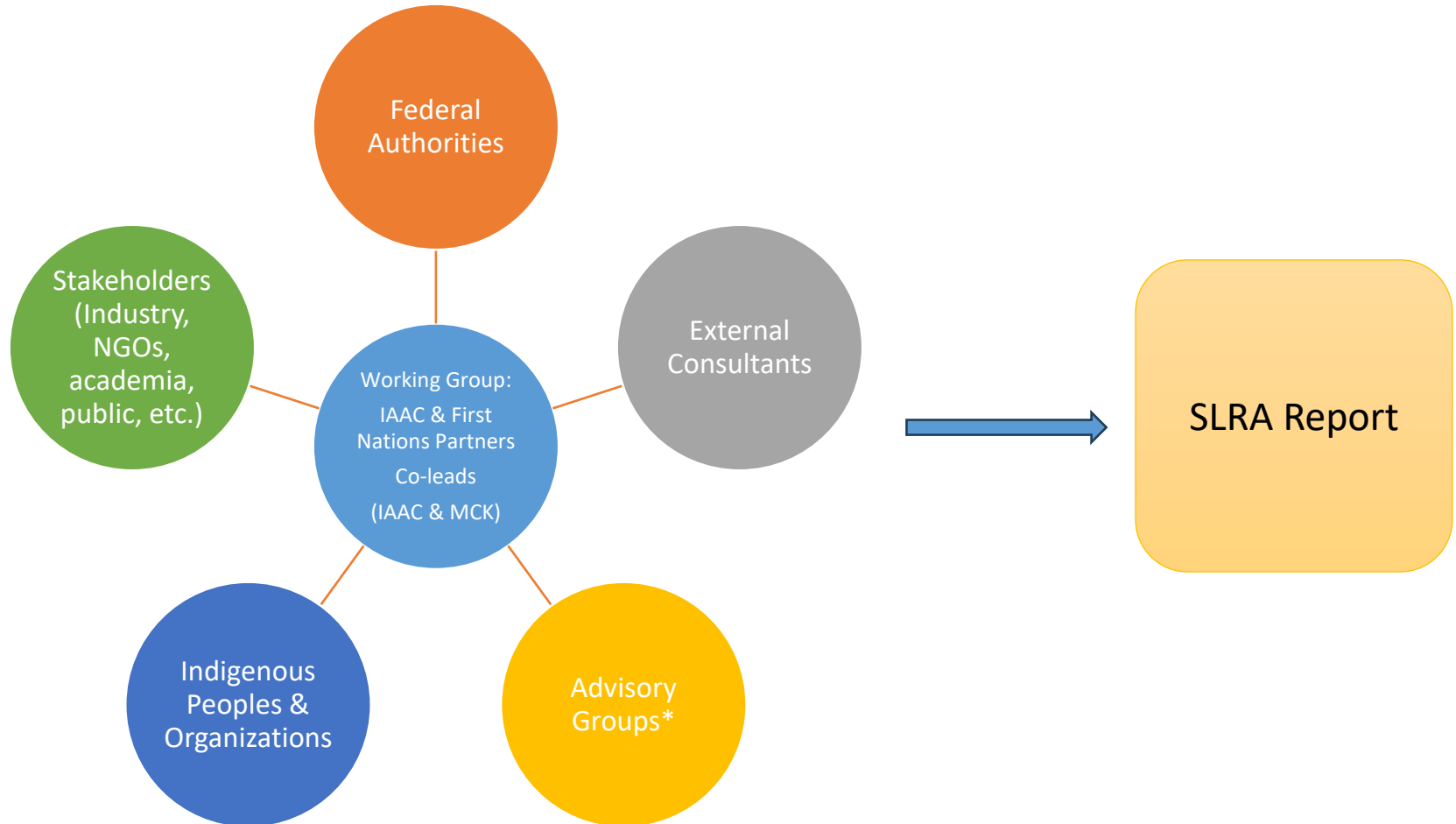
- Port facilities
- Navigational aid structures
- Bridges
- Construction and real estate development
- Dams and reservoirs
- Dredging and sediment management
- Backfilling
- Erosion control infrastructures (e.g. riprap, low walls)
- Wildlife management (compensation projects)
- Alternative energy projects

Complementary activities:

- Agricultural runoff
- Dams and reservoirs
- Dredging and sediment management
- Backfilling
- Navigation activities
- Recreational activities
- Water intakes and municipal and industrial discharges, including sewage overflows and treatment plant effluents
- Power generation
- Urban runoff (e.g. road salts)
- Resource harvesting (commercial and recreational fishing, hunting, seaweed harvesting, aquaculture, hatcheries...)
- Erosion control infrastructures
- Shoreline hardening
- Land/riverbank privatization



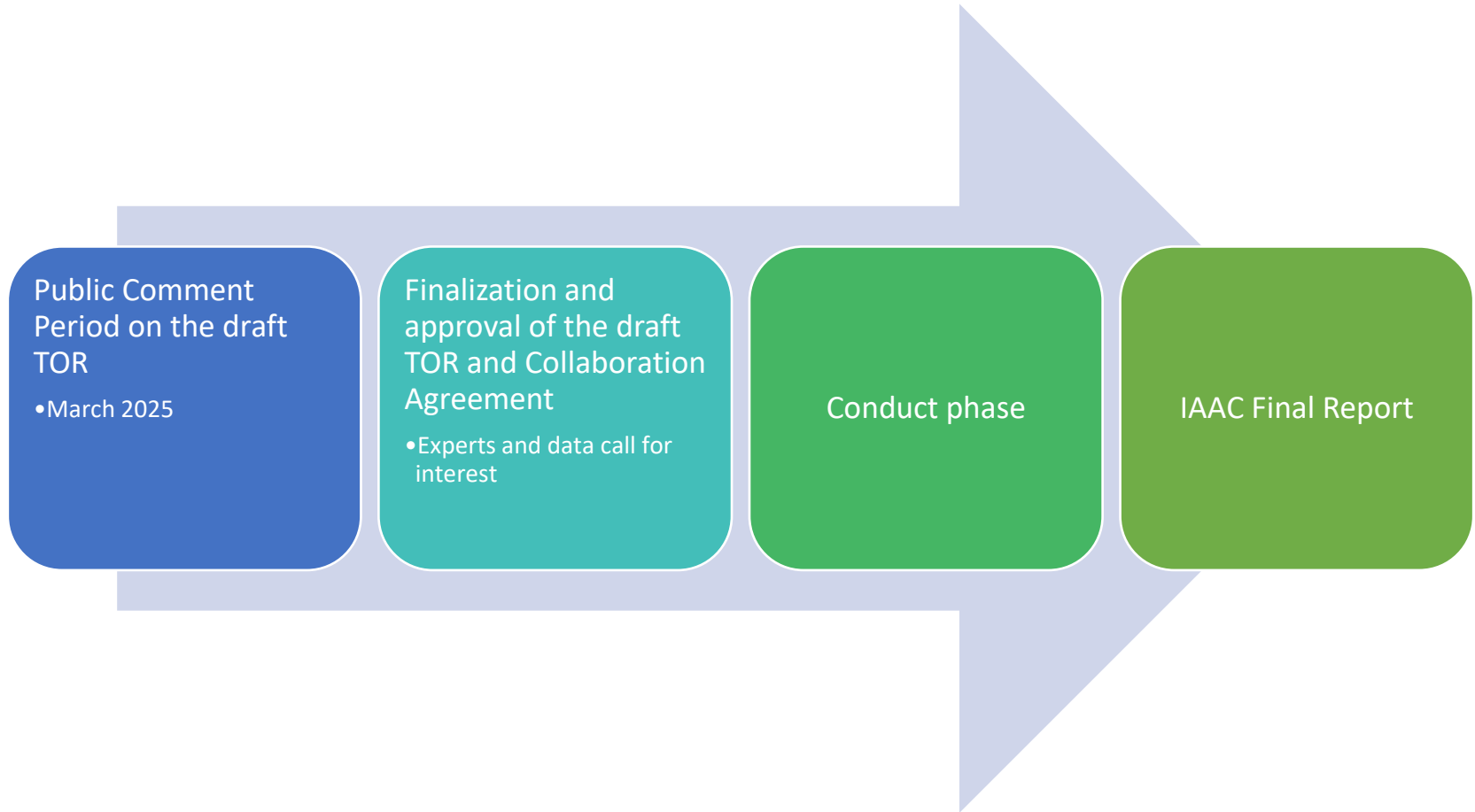
ASSESSMENT PHASE STRUCTURE



**Advisory Groups will be composed from a variety of different representatives & experts. The exact number of Advisory Groups is to be determined.*



NEXT STEPS



COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Submit comments on the draft TOR & ask questions via:

- [Regional Assessment of the St. Lawrence River Area Registry Page](#)
- Email: stlawrence-saintlaurent@iaac-aeic.gc.ca

