

What do you think are the key environmental challenges which will impact the EPA in the future?

Climate change; the need for effective enforcement action; reform of the objectives of the EPA Act; EPA needs a mandate to deal with carbon pollution; transparent data collection and availability; EPA needs ability to influence land use planning decisions; EPA governance and funding must ensure independence and effectiveness; EPA must have a clear role in emergency and day to day situations.

What aspects of the EPA's work do you value and wish to preserve in the future?

Technical competence (of course!)

How can the EPA effectively work in partnership with other government agencies to meet the environmental challenges of the future?

If EPA has a clear legislative mandate and proper funding and independence then partnerships with other govt. agencies should be a secondary concern surely? The public expects an organisation calling itself the EPA to do just that i.e. protect the environment for the public. Why the need for "partnerships"? This question seems to presuppose that the EPA will not be capable of strong, effective and independent action on behalf of the public?

How can the EPA's role in safeguarding the community against the health impacts of pollution be clarified or strengthened?

Through legislative reform to incorporate the idea of environmental justice into the objectives of the Environment Protection Act. Rather than having to wait until pollution occurs, i.e. "accidents waiting to happen", we need to introduce an enforceable "duty not to pollute". The Act must acknowledge that carbon pollution is our most pressing pollution problems and EPA needs a legislative mandate to deal with it.

How could statutory frameworks more effectively prevent future environmental risks and land use conflicts?

The Planning and Environment Act must recognize the EPA as a referral authority with a mandate to enforce its assessments. EPA must be resourced adequately to be able to have oversight in the permit application process.

What role should the EPA play in emergency management?

It must be able to enforce a mandate that pollution be prevented or mitigated, and it must be able to prosecute offenders with effective penalties designed to deter and/or punish.

How can the EPA better identify and, where necessary, address problems that are the result of past activity?

Clean ups must be the responsibility of those who caused the pollution originally. A strong and independent EPA with a legislative mandate to enforce its objectives, should be able to prosecute offenders who have failed to properly clean up their own mess.

What role should the EPA play in improving environmental outcomes beyond those necessary to safeguard human health?

EPA should be resourced so that "State of the Environment" type reports are made regularly available to the public. Environmental justice goes beyond questions of human health to embrace the key idea of environmental sustainability which effects future human health.

What role should the EPA play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

As above, EPA needs a reformed mandate to deal with this most pressing environmental problem.

How do you see environmental justice being applied to the work of the EPA?

It must be incorporated as one of the objectives of the EPA Act.

What can we adopt from other regulators and regulatory models to implement best-practice approaches and ensure that the EPA can rise to key future challenges?

Have insufficient knowledge about this area.

Are there any other issues relevant to the Terms of Reference that you would like to raise?

No

What can the EPA do to avoid potential future problems?

It's up to the parliament to legislate so that the EPA is no longer seen as a toothless tiger.