

2022-01 CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

Whereas #1 on April 13, 2021, the Federal Government introduced legislation, Bill C-28, to upgrade the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) 1999, but an election was called before it made its way through parliament, and it has now been reintroduced as Bill S-5; and

Whereas #2 CEPA which provides the legislative framework for protecting human health and the environment from pollution and toxics requires regular updating and should be modernized; and

Whereas #3 while Bill S-5 contained much needed improvements CEPA needs to be further strengthened; therefore, be it

Resolved #1 that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that Canadian environmental protection legislation include:

- a) the right to a healthy environment with no qualifying language and with an implementation framework
- b) a list of substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to all species' reproduction to be updated annually
- c) a list of toxic substances and provisions for the elimination of inorganic substances such as mercury and lead with a mandatory pollution prevention plan
- d) a shift to the use of less harmful chemicals
- e) provisions for assessing and managing the environment I risks of new drugs
- f) consideration of population species which are vulnerable to toxic substances
- g) aggregate exposures and cumulative effects
- h) clear time frames for assessments and remediation
- i) legally binding air, land, and water quality standards
- j) the requirement for GMO food labelling
- k) requiring the proponent to provide the proof that a new living organism is not toxic; and be it further

Resolved #2 that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to reintroduce and prioritize legislation to upgrade CEPA with the following amendments:

- a) remove the qualifying language in the right to a healthy environment, of balancing the right and develop an implementation framework
- b) specify in the act the substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to reproduction of all species, to be updated annually and indicate how they will be addressed
- c) restore the phrase "List of Toxic Substances" to Schedule
- d) make a pollution prevention plan mandatory and aim for the virtual elimination of inorganic substances such as mercury and lead;

- e) shift to safer alternatives to toxic substances;
- f) clearly define populations vulnerable to toxic substances
- g) require assessments of aggregate exposures to substances as well as cumulative effects, not only in humans but in nature
- h) establish clear time frames for assessments so that risk management actions can proceed without delays
- i) make ambient air quality standards legally binding
- j) require GMO food labelling
- k) reverse the burden of proof and require that the proponent show that a new living organism is not toxic.