

The Regulatory Process North of 60: Current Challenges and Thoughts on a Simpler Future

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Canada's three northern territories are home to multiple jurisdictions with unique regulatory requirements. Oil and gas companies planning to explore for, or develop, hydrocarbon resources in the north currently face complex environmental assessment and approvals processes. Factors such as uncertain timelines, regulatory overlap, aboriginal land claims and devolving governments interact to create a challenging regulatory environment for proponents. An examination of critical regulatory impediments and case studies of project approval processes in different northern jurisdictions will illuminate past and current challenges. Key steps required by project proponents to successfully navigate the present day systems will be discussed and perspectives on potential improvements to the processes will be offered.