

**RESPONSE TO**  
**the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Petition no. 0388**

**Question 1**

The Coalition to Protect the Central Experimental Farm National Historic Site of Canada requested an explanation as to why a strategic environmental assessment was not conducted to inform the decision-making process as per the 2010 Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals.

**Response**

As noted in the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development's 2015 Fall Report, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) did not conduct a formal strategic environmental assessment for the proposed land transfer between the Department and the National Capital Commission. The purpose of conducting strategic environmental assessments is to incorporate environmental considerations into the development of public policies and strategic decisions. This was an oversight, and AAFC has agreed with the conclusions of the Commissioner and since put in place appropriate steps and procedures to ensure the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals will be thoroughly applied in the future.

The transfer of land in itself does not meet the definition of a "project" under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*, nor is it prescribed in the associated *Regulations Designating Physical Activities*. Therefore, the land transfer is not subject to a federal environmental assessment or determination under the Act.

There are no specific policy requirements for public hearings or consultations. Given the interest generated, the Government of Canada is supporting an approach that will involve public consultations at various stages of the process.

**Question 6**

The Coalition is requesting the publication of criteria used for assessing the ideal site for the construction of the Civic Campus, as well as the site considered.

**Response**

The criteria were elaborated by The Ottawa Hospital and have already been made public. They can be obtained from the Hospital or from its website, at [www.ottawahospital.on.ca/wps/portal/Base/TheHospital/Resources/NewCivicCampus/FAQ](http://www.ottawahospital.on.ca/wps/portal/Base/TheHospital/Resources/NewCivicCampus/FAQ).