

URGENT ACTION

HALT PIPELINE PROJECT WITH OUTDATED PERMIT

An environmental assessment certificate for the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission (PRGT) liquified natural gas pipeline project expires on 25 November 2024. In 2014, the government approved the certificate even though it found that the project would have significant adverse effects and increase greenhouse gas emissions. Since then, the pipeline route, which goes through several Indigenous Nation's unceded, ancestral territories, has changed. The indefinite extension of the certificate puts everyone's right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and Indigenous Peoples' ways of life at risk. We call for a new assessment to be conducted, in full consultation with the Indigenous Peoples along the pipeline route.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Honourable David Eby
Premier of British Columbia
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC
V8W 9E1, Canada

Dear Premier Eby,

I am deeply concerned about the serious human rights and environmental risks posed by the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission (PRGT) project if it is allowed to proceed on a decade-old environmental assessment. I urge you to ensure that the province carries out a new environmental assessment of the project which reflects our changing climate and takes into account provincial obligations under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

PRGT's proposed route passes through the unceded, ancestral territories of several Indigenous Nations. As a historical emitter, Canada has a heightened duty to halt the licensing of new projects extracting fossil fuels. The governments of Canada and British Columbia also have the obligation to carry out comprehensive and timely environmental and social impact assessments prior to approving projects, and to share these with Indigenous Peoples as part of the consultation process in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent regarding activities that affect them.

Since 2021, the International Energy Agency has consistently warned that new fossil fuel projects would lock in increased greenhouse gas emissions and contradict the imperative of achieving net-zero globally by 2050. Circumstances have also changed significantly since the 2014 environmental assessment of the project. Since that time, the province of British Columbia has introduced more stringent, stronger air quality standards and superior mitigation targets. Economic and environmental conditions have changed, and climate change is escalating. Local rivers are warmer and have less water, salmon and other fish and wildlife populations are at higher risk, and more frequent wildfires are having an increasing impact on the region.

I am also concerned that the construction of the PRGT pipeline has begun even though the project does not have an approved endpoint. The current environmental assessment certificate is based on the pipeline's route ending on Lelu Island. Since this is no longer the case and the pipeline's route would likely change if the project goes ahead, a new environmental assessment is all the more necessary.

I urge you to ensure that there is a new environmental assessment of the PRGT project and that a consultation process consistent with domestic and international human rights laws and standards is urgently and transparently undertaken with all impacted Indigenous Peoples along the pipeline route.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Prince Rupert Gas Transmission (PRGT) project is a 900-kilometre, 48-inch diameter pipeline that would ship liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Hudson's Hope in northeastern British Columbia to a proposed LNG export facility on BC's northwestern coast whose exact location is yet to be confirmed by the provincial government. The Prince Rupert Gas Transmission Holdings Ltd. and the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission Limited Partnership (PRGT Ltd.) is currently owned by the Nisga'a Nation and Western LNG LLC.

The British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office (BC EAO) approved the PRGT project's [environmental assessment certificate](#) on 25 November 2014 (allowing the project to go forward), based on environmental assessments that were undertaken that year and in years prior. The BC EAO approved the certificate despite the fact that its [assessment](#) found that the project would have significant adverse effects on caribou and greenhouse gas emissions. At the time the PRGT project received its environmental assessment certificate, the pipeline's proposed endpoint was the Pacific Northwest LNG terminal on Lelu Island, however, the terminal project was cancelled in 2017 before construction began on either PRGT or Pacific Northwest LNG. In 2024, PRGT Ltd. [applied](#) to the BC EAO to change the endpoint of the pipeline to the proposed Ksi Lisims LNG terminal on Pearse Island; a terminal that is currently undergoing an [environmental assessment](#) and has not yet been approved by the BC Government. In other words, the PRGT pipeline does not currently have an approved end point. If the request to change the endpoint of the pipeline to the Ksi Lisims LNG terminal is approved and that terminal receives approval from the BC Government, the PRGT's pipeline's route would also change meaning that the environmental assessments undertaken by the companies in 2014 and earlier would no longer be representative of the pipeline's new route.

In 2019, the PRGT project received a one-time extension of its environmental assessment certificate which stipulates that the project must be substantially started by 25 November 2024. In accordance with the BC EAO's Substantial Start Determination Policy, if the PRGT project is "substantially started" by 25 November 2024, the environmental assessment certificate will remain in effect for the lifetime of the project, a determination which the BC EAO is due to make. If the project is not started by that date, the environmental assessment certificate will expire. Some clearing of the forest for the PRGT pipeline began on 24 August 2024.

[Circumstances have changed significantly](#) since the 2014 environmental assessment of the project. Since that time, the province of British Columbia has introduced more stringent air quality standards and superior greenhouse gas emission targets. Economic and environmental conditions have changed, and climate change is escalating. Local rivers are warmer and have less water, salmon and other fish and wildlife populations are at higher risk, and more frequent wildfires are having an increasing impact on the region. Moreover, construction of the PRGT pipeline has begun even though the project does not have an approved endpoint, and the current environmental assessment certificate is based on a route that ends on Lelu Island which will no longer be the case if the project goes forward.

PRGT's proposed route passes through the unceded, ancestral territories of several Indigenous Nations. Since construction began on the project in August 2024 numerous Nations, including the Gitanyow, Gitksan and members of the Nisga'a have voiced their opposition to the project being permitted to proceed on environmental assessments that are over a decade old. Both the Gitanyow and Gitksan has erected blockades along the proposed pipeline route to prevent construction from advancing. Several court cases have been filed against the PRGT project, as well as the proposed Ksi Lisims LNG terminal project.

The governments of Canada and British Columbia have the duty to halt the licensing of new projects extracting fossil fuels, as well as the obligation to carry out comprehensive and timely environmental and social impact assessments prior to approving projects, and to share these with Indigenous Peoples as part of the consultation process in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent. They have the obligation to consult and cooperate in good faith with Indigenous Peoples through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their territories and other resources. The duty to consult should be an ongoing process of dialogue and negotiation which takes place over the course of a project, from the earliest stages of project planning to implementation and follow-up.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English. You may also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 25 November 2024

NAME AND PRONOUNS: Indigenous Land Defenders (all genders)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: N/A