

CIELAP Research Methodology :

Our Approach:

Addressing today's complex environmental challenges requires a holistic, multidisciplinary and participatory approach. CIELAP is devoted to answering these challenges through fresh thinking rooted in objective, peer reviewed research. Our research approach reflects Sustainability thinking and its exploration of interconnections between the environmental, social and economic dimensions of current and emerging issues.

In keeping with the principles of the United Nations' Agenda 21, CIELAP recognises that achieving the objectives of Sustainable Development is only possible through the meaningful involvement of all sectors of society. CIELAP routinely consults a wide range of experts and stakeholders at all stages of our projects, from design and research to peer review.

Our Research Methodology:

1) Project Design:

We engage relevant stakeholders and experts at the design and proposal phase of our projects to ensure the work we produce will ultimately be useful to those involved in the issue at hand, whether it be citizens, corporate leaders, small business owners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), holders of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), faith communities, or policy makers working at the federal, provincial or municipal levels of government. We aim to forge strategic partnerships with other organizations that will help us maximize the quality, relevance and impact of our work.

2) Research:

Rather than exclusively advocating the concerns of any one sector in our research, CIELAP seeks to identify potential areas of consensus among stakeholders wherever possible, from which realistic policy recommendations with a strong chance of being implemented can be derived. However, it is important that these recommendations also be consistent with CIELAP's mission to help Canadian governments build a strong foundation for Sustainable Development.

We draw on a wide range of information in our research, including, but not limited to: peer reviewed academic journals, consultants' reports, government and industry publications, web-based materials, TEK acquired from Canadian First Nations and others, as well as local and major news media. All quantitative aspects of CIELAP's research make use of the metric system.

CIELAP routinely conducts interviews with stakeholders that represent the diversity of Canadian society in order to reflect current trends and generate timely primary research for our projects. Potential interview candidates include all of the stakeholder groups identified in section 4.2.1 of our 2009-2014 Strategic Plan (Dated 17th December 2009). We fully consider this wide range of information for each of our research projects.

Wherever it is feasible and appropriate, CIELAP provides a detailed analysis of what legislative and policy approaches have been successful (or unsuccessful) in other jurisdictions and critically

examines the potential for favourable outcomes realised elsewhere to be applied within Canada's federal, provincial or municipal policy contexts.

3) Peer Review:

All of CIELAP's research projects are subject to a rigorous peer review process. Depending on the nature and scope of the project, CIELAP submits its reports to a minimum of two (2) and up to as many as five (5) peer reviewers. Reviewers are typically selected from across the scientific/academic, corporate, non-profit, legal and governmental sectors for all of our major reports and, as appropriate, may include anyone from senior executives to local farmers.

Looking to the Future:

Historically, CIELAP's work has been recognized for providing a balanced perspective on the environmental issues of the day. Following from the objectives identified in our 2009-2014 Strategic Plan, CIELAP will take additional measures to ensure our research and publications are of the highest standard and relevance in current debates on the environment within the Sustainability context.

CIELAP has formed a Research Advisory Committee composed of academics, lawyers, scientists and other leading experts on the environment and Sustainable Development. In addition to our standard peer review process, CIELAP requires that a minimum of one (1) Research Advisory Committee member and one (1) member of the CIELAP Board of Directors review our research. The Committee will also assist in guiding our general research direction.