

Canadian Environmental Law Association History and Mandate

**Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) began in 1970,
funded as a legal aid clinic since 1978**

- We are a not for profit speciality law clinic focused on environmental matters
- We use existing laws to protect the environment and to advocate improvements to environmental laws particularly to protect human health and safety from environmental impacts
- Primary focus is assisting low-income people and disadvantaged communities where environmental health and safety are at stake

Core mandate is to provide access to environmental justice and ensure public participation in environmental decision-making

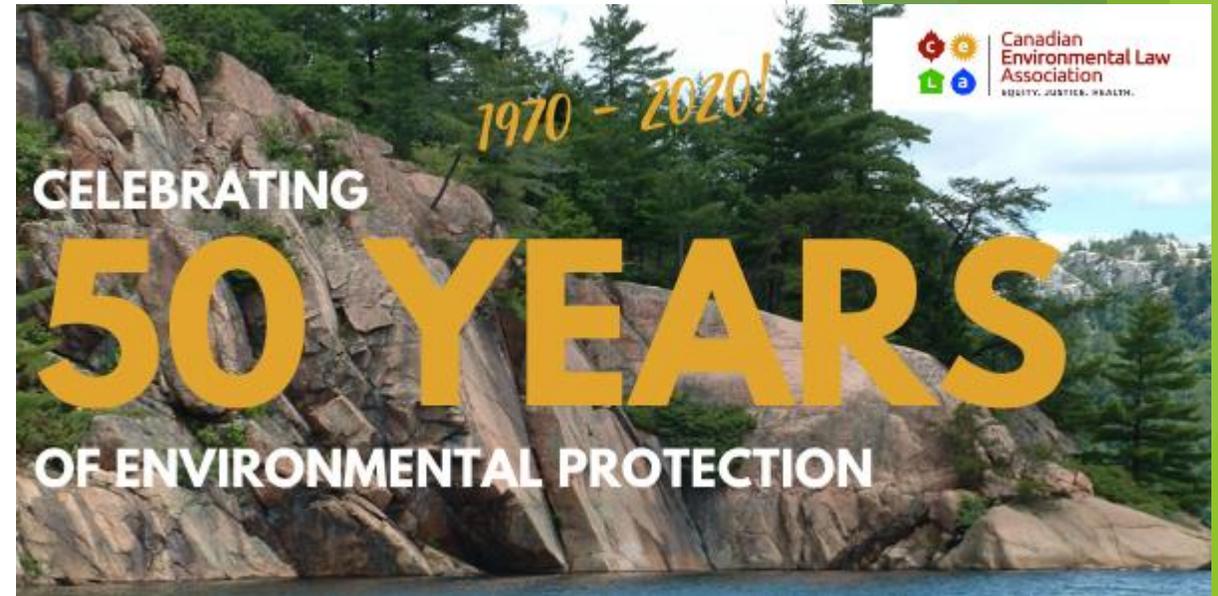
CELA's Strategic Priorities

1. Access to Environmental Justice

- ▶ CELA places high priority on cases and law reform work aimed at ensuring access to environmental justice

2. Pollution Prevention and Public Health and Safety

- ▶ CELA places high priority on cases and law reform work aimed at ensuring safe, healthy and livable communities



Civil Society Engagement: Rationale for participation

- ▶ International Agreements and Policy Frameworks on Toxic Chemicals Management - Long and rich history of civil society engagement from Canada, examples:
 - ▶ Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
 - ▶ Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
 - ▶ Strategic Approach on International Chemicals Management
 - ▶ Minamata Convention on Mercury
- ▶ Relevance and Linkages to Canada's domestic regulatory and programs on toxic chemicals
- ▶ Advance Global Efforts to Reduce Toxic Exposure through Preventative Approaches
 - ▶ Implement prevention strategies with a focus on life cycle approach and substitution requirements, right to know regimes, and effective public participation process related to toxic chemicals.



Civil Society Participation - Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges for Effective Public Engagement on SAICM

- ▶ transparency and role of Canadian public stakeholders in Canada's decision making framework on SAICM limited
- ▶ Resources for effective engagement limited (attendance and preparation for meetings)
- ▶ Communications related to SAICM goals and focus

Opportunities for Civil Society

- ▶ Learn, share and contribute to the global negotiations to promote pollution preventative strategies emerging from Canada's chemicals management programs and legislations.
- ▶ Collaborate with global partners on programs to achieve prevention and elimination strategies for toxic chemicals.
- ▶ Foster relationships with Canadian government departments on international initiatives.