



**Professional Geoscientists of Ontario (PGO)**  
**PGO Sustainability and Climate Change Committee (SCCC)**  
**Terms of Reference (ToR)**

## **Status**

The Sustainability and Climate Change Committee (“Committee” herein) is a Standing Committee sanctioned to address the mandate outlined below. The operational term of the Committee is open-ended.

## **Mandate**

The mandate of the Sustainability and Climate Change Committee is to:

- Contribute to PGO's mission of protecting the public and advancing professional practice by providing support relating to sustainability and climate change.
- Provide recommendations and guidance to Council on issues related to sustainability and climate change.
- Other duties and responsibilities that may be assigned by Council from time to time.

## **Composition/Organization**

It is recommended that the Committee should include, by appointment of Council:

- At least three registrants in good standing who are involved in the field of geoscience (this may include the Chair and Vice-Chair), selected in consideration of work experience, and availability of resources
- A Councillor
- A member of PGO Staff
- A member of the Professional Practice Committee
- It is desired to have:
  - a non-geoscientist, selected in consideration of work experience and availability of resources
  - a member with experience related to sustainability and climate change considerations in infrastructure design
  - a member with experience in financial, climate risk or sustainability-related disclosures
  - a member with experience in social issues and sustainability
  - a Geoscientist-in-Training or Student Registrant

## **Committee Selection**

Committee appointments are to be for a period of one (1) year, or as requested by Council, and are selected according to the following procedures:

- The Chair is to be nominated by the Committee and approved by Council annually;
- The Vice-Chair is to be selected by Committee members annually;
- The recommended terms of the Chair and Vice-Chair are two years;
- It is recommended that the Vice-Chair shall normally succeed the Chair;
- Members of the Committee are to be selected, or if already a member, are to be re-affirmed on an annual basis by Council on recommendation by the Chair following best practices (i.e., considering diversity and inclusion, demographics, etc.) and availability of resources.

Observers and invited experts may attend Committee meetings by request and/or invitation.

The Vice-Chair will replace the Chair upon their resignation. If the Vice-Chair is not able to fulfill this role, then the Committee will select a replacement and a new Vice-Chair.

## **Functions and Responsibilities**

The Committee has functions and responsibilities that include but are not limited to the following:

- Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas related to sustainability and climate change within PGO.
- Identify resources and training to support registrants in incorporating sustainability and climate change considerations within their practice and decision making.
- Liaise with external parties (e.g., regulators, other professional self-regulating organizations, technical organizations, university educators following PGO communications practices and/or directed by Council, respecting topics and issues affecting professional geoscience practice related to sustainability and climate change.
- Review existing topics and issues, proposed guidelines or consultation documents that may affect professional geoscience practice in Ontario as it relates to sustainability and climate change and recommend an appropriate response to Council.

## **Outcomes and Deliverables**

The Committee has the following outcomes and deliverables:

- Geoscience professional practice guidelines and updates related to sustainability and climate change to be provided through work with the professional practice committee and subcommittees.
- Support PGO communications with respect to sustainability and climate change.
- Input to PGO's Strategic Plan.
- Presentation to Council of updates and key issues as requested.
- Periodic reporting to Council on findings and progress of the Committee.
- Provision of an Annual Report to Council by February 28 following the December 31 year end.

## **Operational Considerations**

The Committee operates with the following considerations:

- Meetings will be held as deemed required;
- Recommendations and decisions of the Committee will be by consensus to the extent reasonably possible;
- When consensus is not achievable, a majority of votes shall determine the outcome, as per Bourinot's Rules of Order, which governs the meetings of members, Council and committees of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario as per its By-Law #1A. Section 6.05;
- At least one week's notice will be given prior to meeting, or on the occasion that a shorter timeframe is required, sufficient rationalization will be provided;
- The Chair or any Committee member that the Chair may designate shall record, prepare, and deliver minutes or notes of meetings to the Committee members within 30 days of Committee meeting being held;
- Final minutes of meetings will be submitted to the PGO CEO within 30 days of said meeting being held;
- The Committee reports to Council through the Chair (or designated appointee);
- Deliberations of the Committee are considered confidential to Committee members.
- The documents and information considered by the Committee should be provided to the CEO, or such other appropriate PGO staff person as is designated for the task, for retention and, when appropriate, destruction;
- It is noted that the Committee minutes, documents and information should be made, collected, retained and destroyed in a secure manner with appropriate safeguards including limiting access to them to appropriate persons only.

## **Training Requirement**

Committee members will be provided training by PGO, as well as by Committee Chairs at such times as those Chairs shall determine, for Committee Members to help them carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively.



## **Authority**

In order to complete its mandate, the Sustainability and Climate Change Committee has the authority to:

- Seek external support from staff or contractors as needed to fulfill tasks within its mandate, subject to the approval of Council (or, if the situation does not permit delay, the approval of Executive Committee);
  - Foresee, plan for, and submit its external support needs as part of the annual PGO budgeting process conducted by the Finance Committee and by Council.

## **Review**

The Governance Committee shall review the Terms of Reference of the Sustainability and Climate Change Committee next in 2025 and at least once every three years thereafter, or as mandated by the Council.

## **References**

Professional Geoscientists Act  
PGO By-Law No. 1A