

# Regional Assessments: Implications for IA Effectiveness and Efficiency (incl Cumulative Effects....)



**Steve Bonnell, PhD**

*Head, Regional and Strategic Assessment Research*

*Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC)*

*[www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca](http://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca)*



# Introduction and Contents

Regional Assessments under the *Impact Assessment Act*

Regional Assessment Objectives, Outcomes, Uses

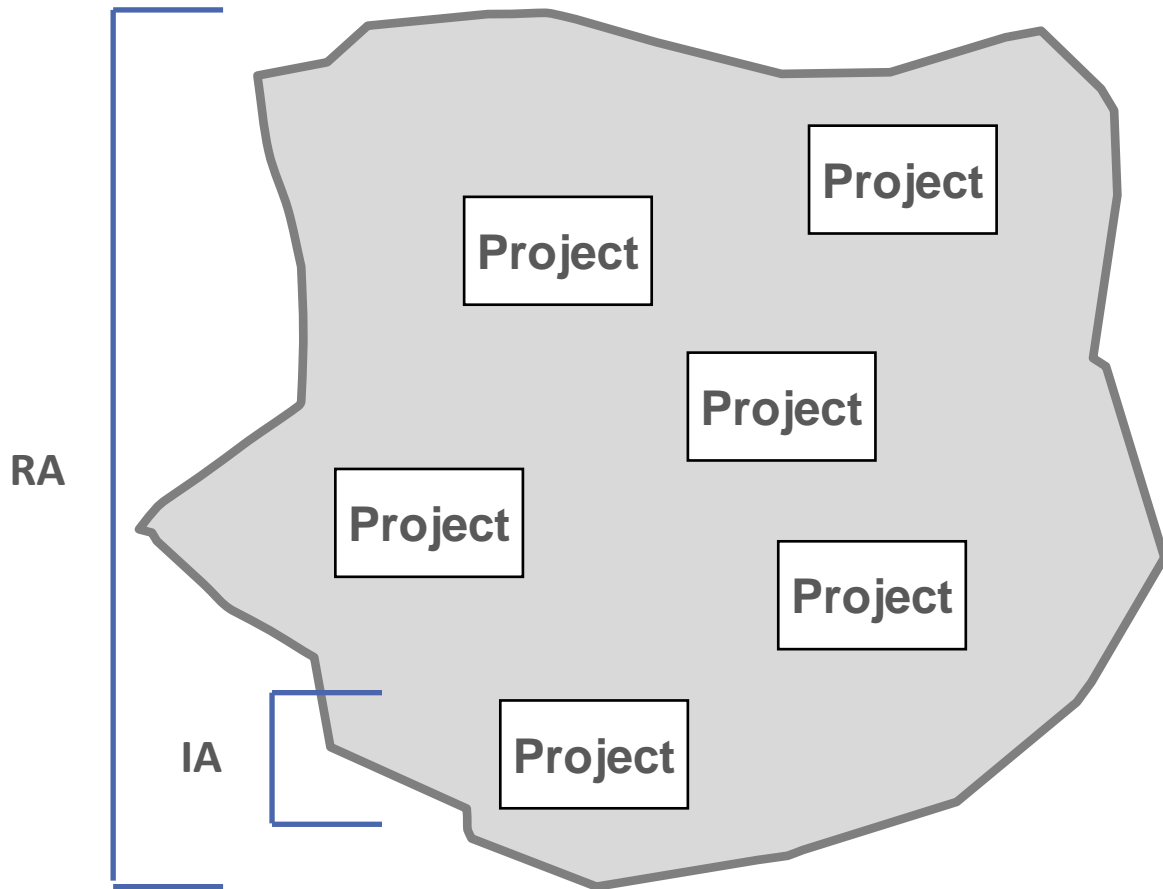
IAAC Regional Assessment Program

Some Key Lessons to Date

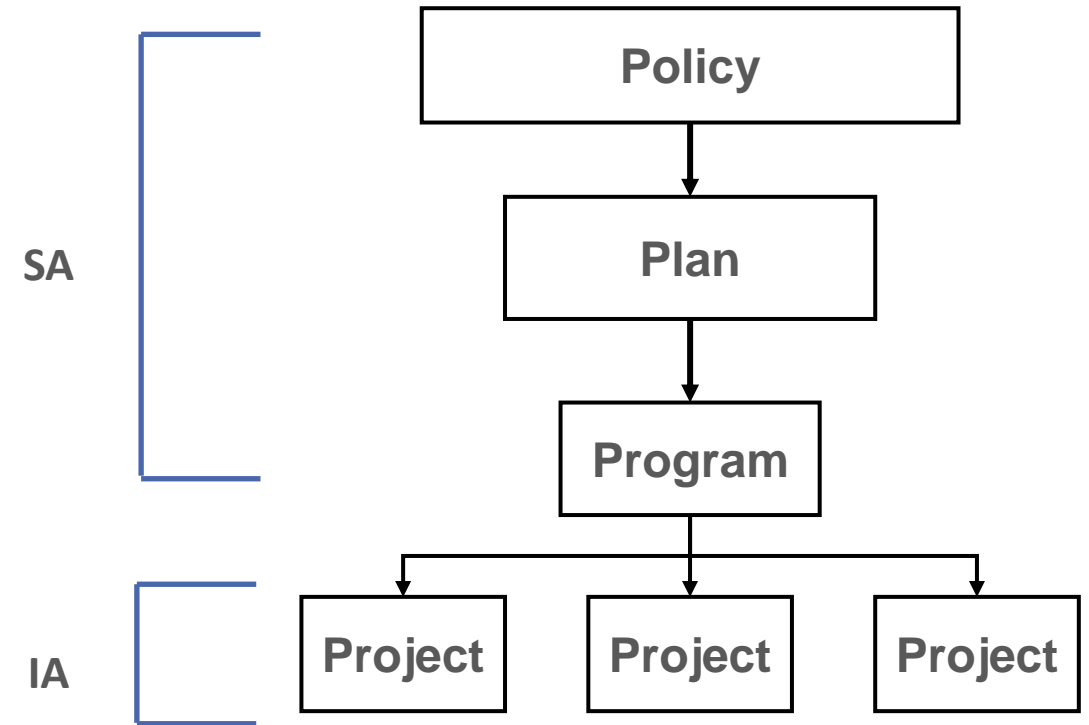
*Questions / Discussion*



## Regional Assessment



## Strategic Assessment



*...Can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of impact assessments by providing information and analysis that may not be otherwise available at the project level, and by providing advice on how issues...should be addressed.*

***IAAC Policy Framework (2025)***



**Informing Project IA**

**Regional Effects Analysis /  
Management**

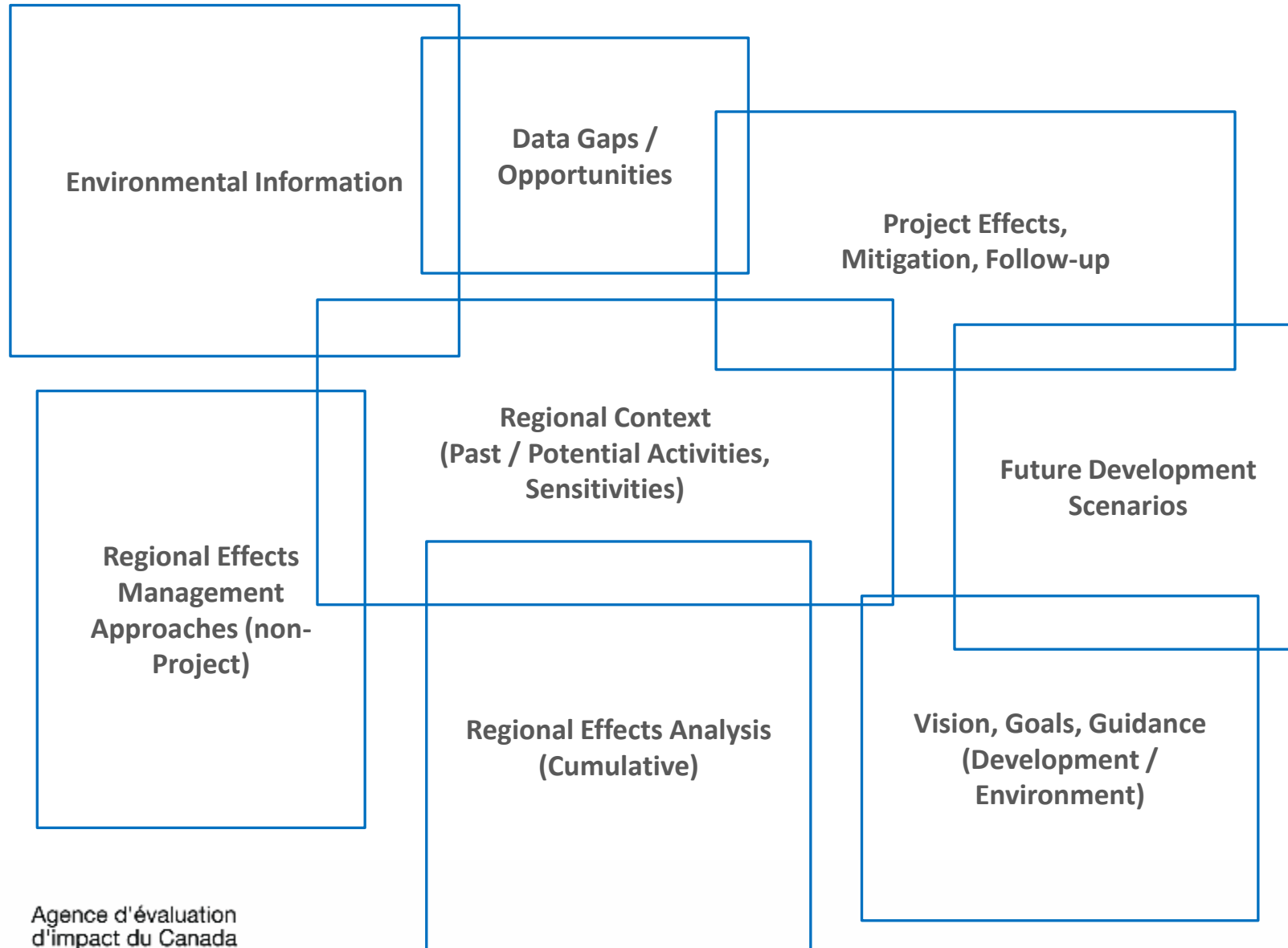
# Regional Assessment

**Regional Planning**



# Regional Assessment

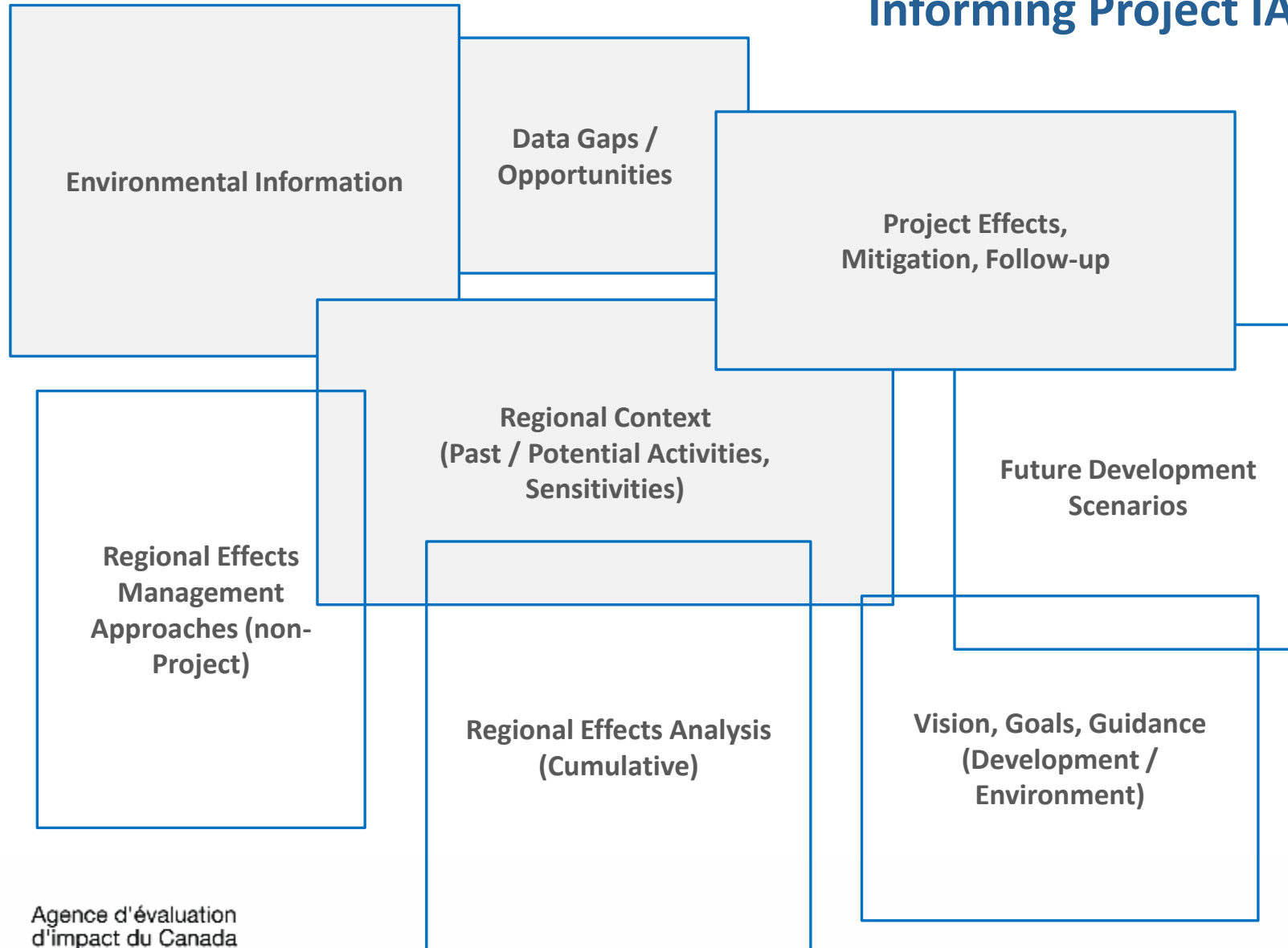
## *Key Objectives and Outputs*



# Regional Assessment

## *Key Objectives and Outputs*

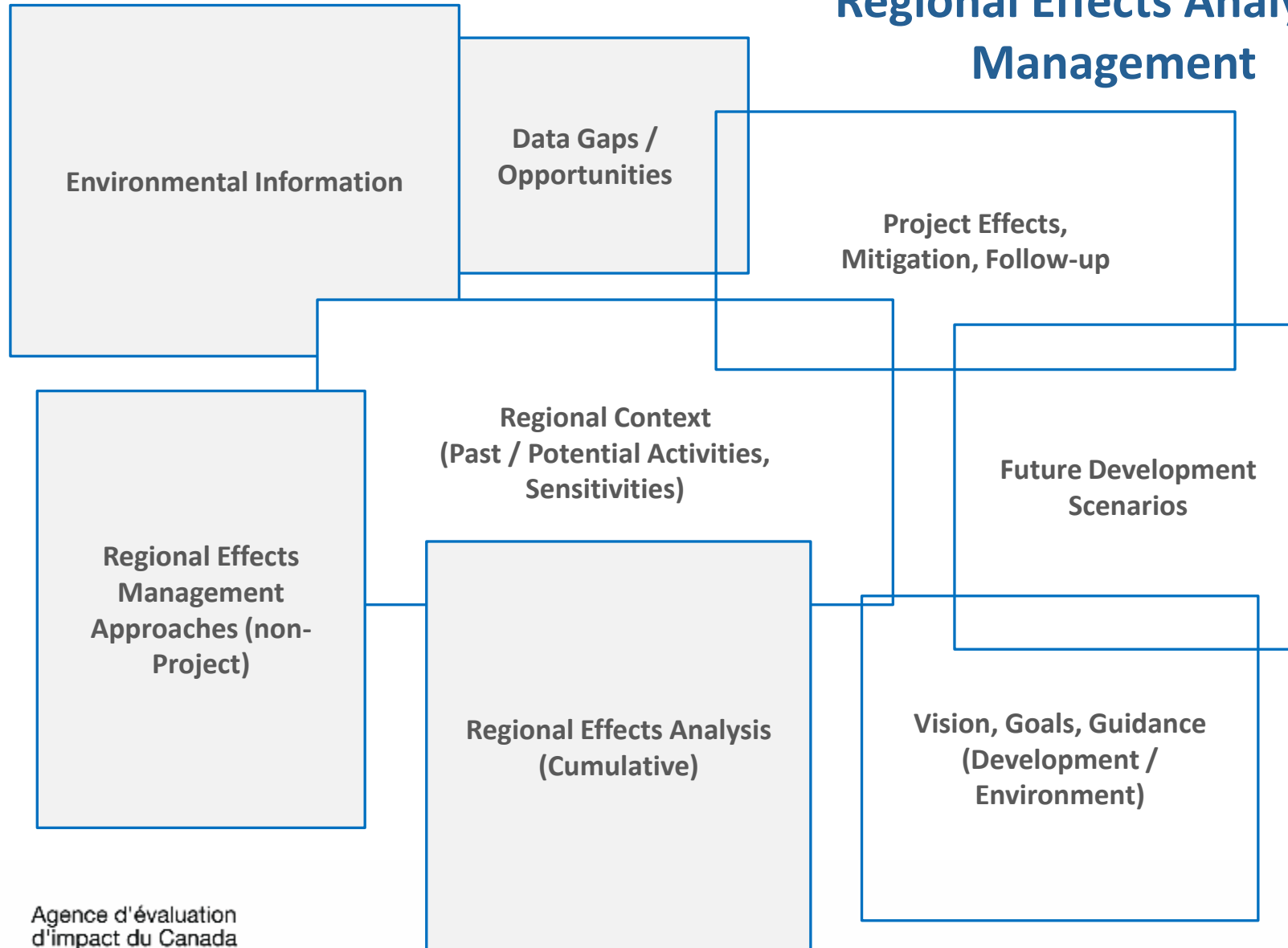
### Informing Project IA



# Regional Assessment

## *Key Objectives and Outputs*

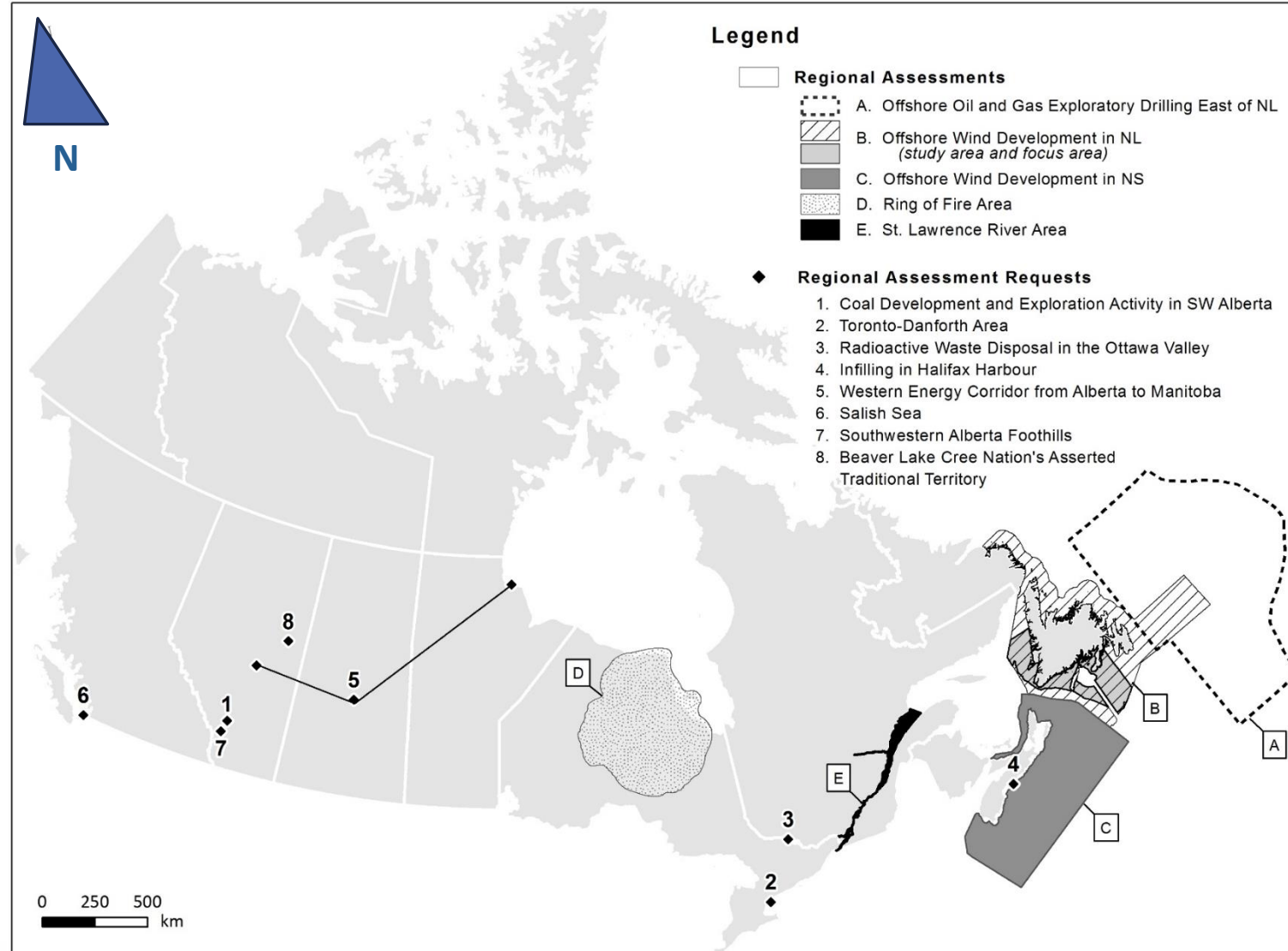
### Regional Effects Analysis / Management







# Regional Assessments Completed, Requested or In Progress





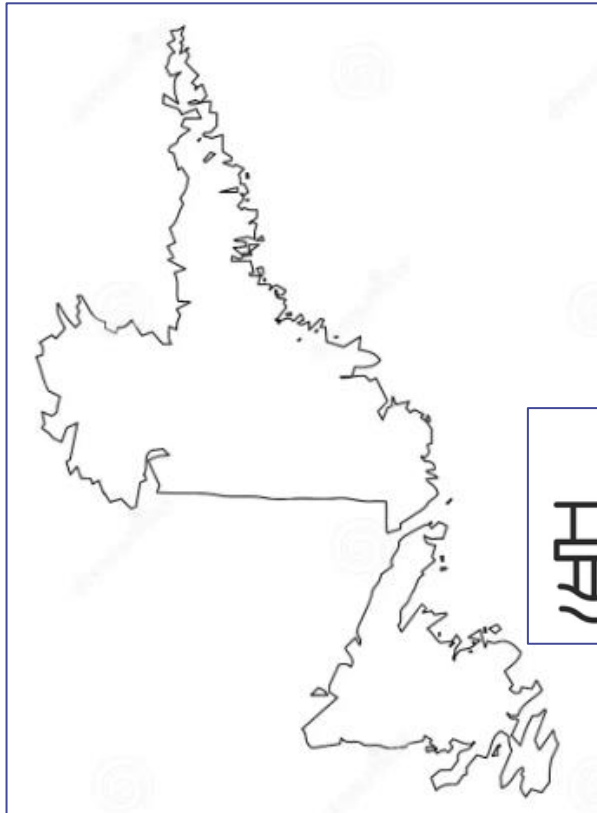
Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada

# Regional Assessment

## *Oil and Gas Exploratory Drilling Offshore Eastern NL*

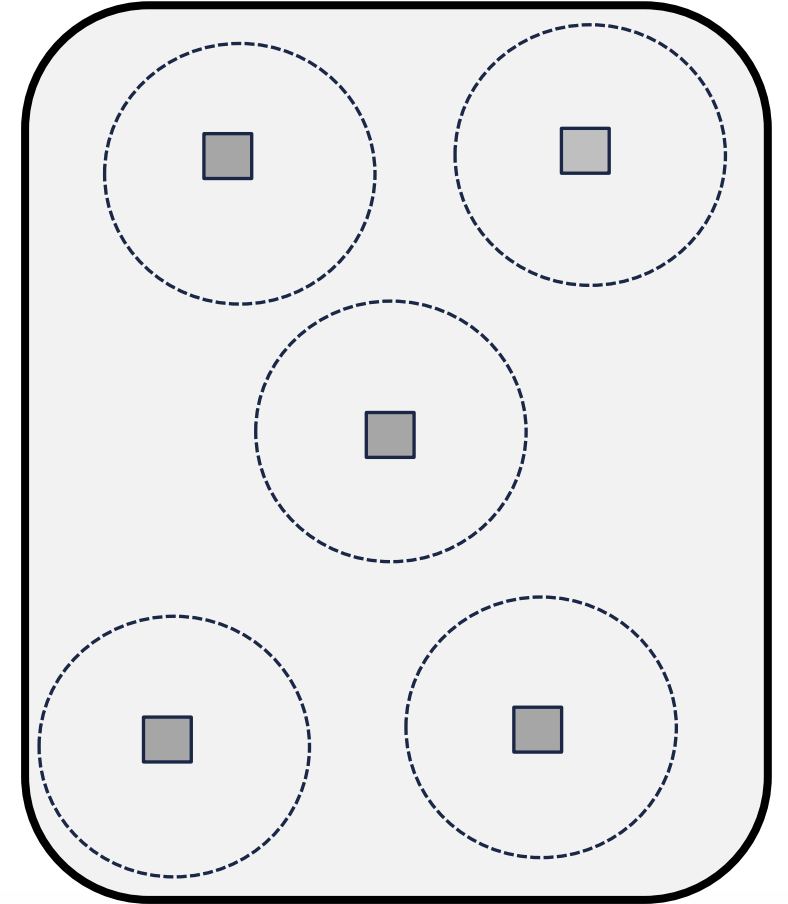


Environmental Information

Project Effects,  
Mitigation, Follow-up



IA Exemption Regulation



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada



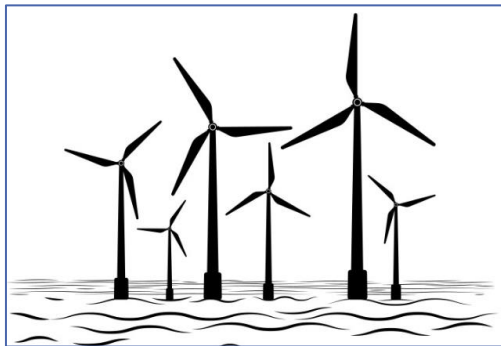
Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada

# Regional Assessment

## Offshore Wind in NL and NS

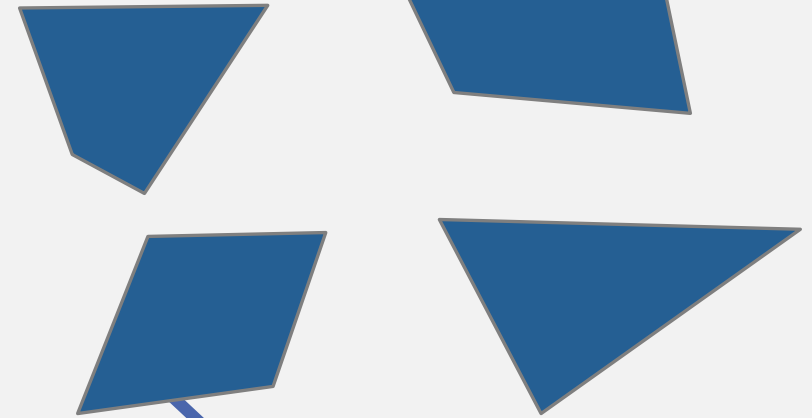


Environmental Information

Project Effects,  
Mitigation, Follow-up

Regional Effects Analysis /  
Context

Licensing



Project IA



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada



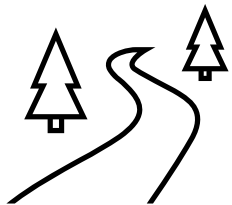
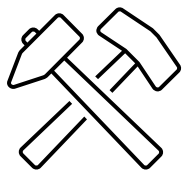
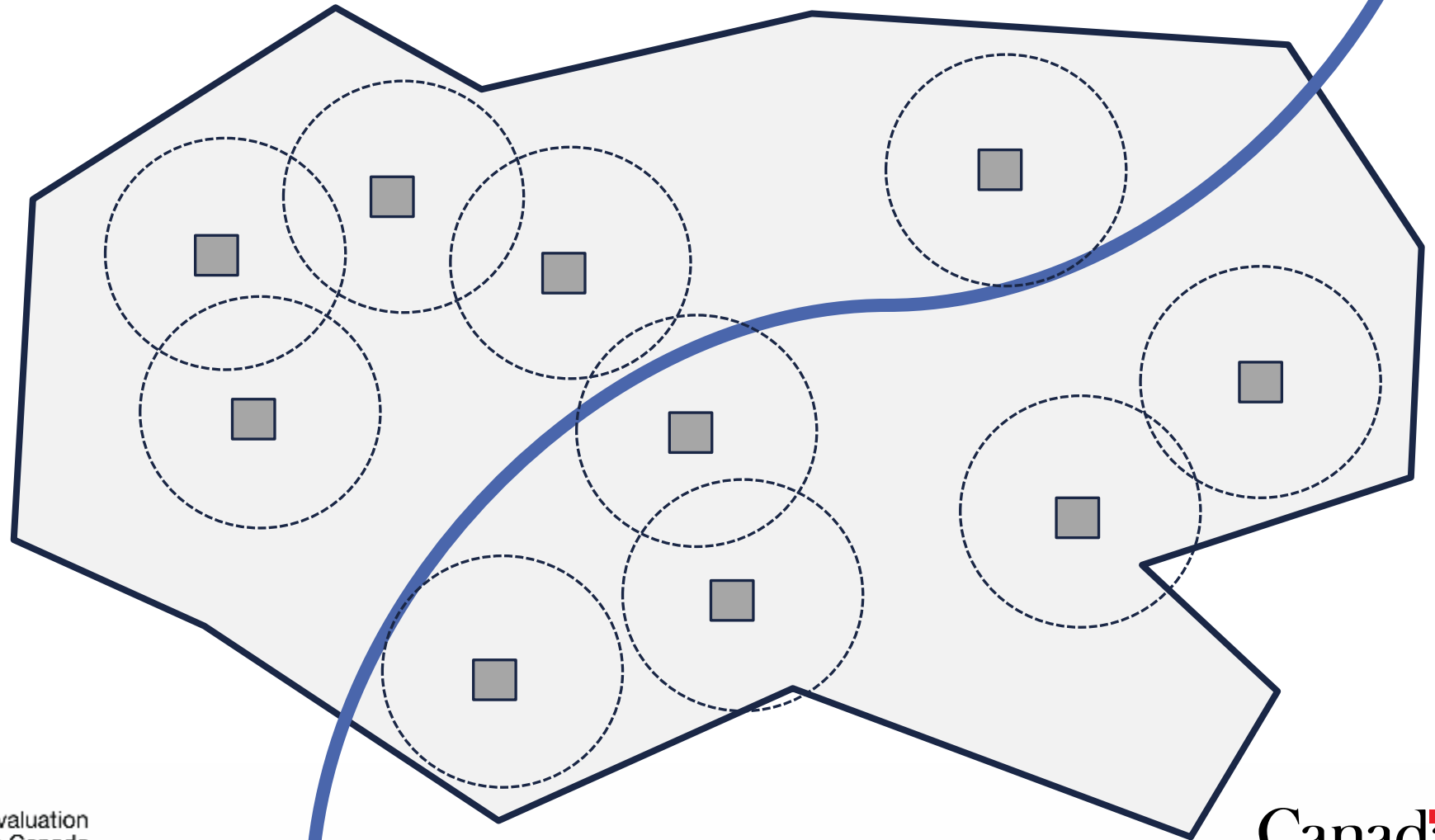
Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada

# Regional Assessment

*Ring of Fire Area (Ontario)*



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada





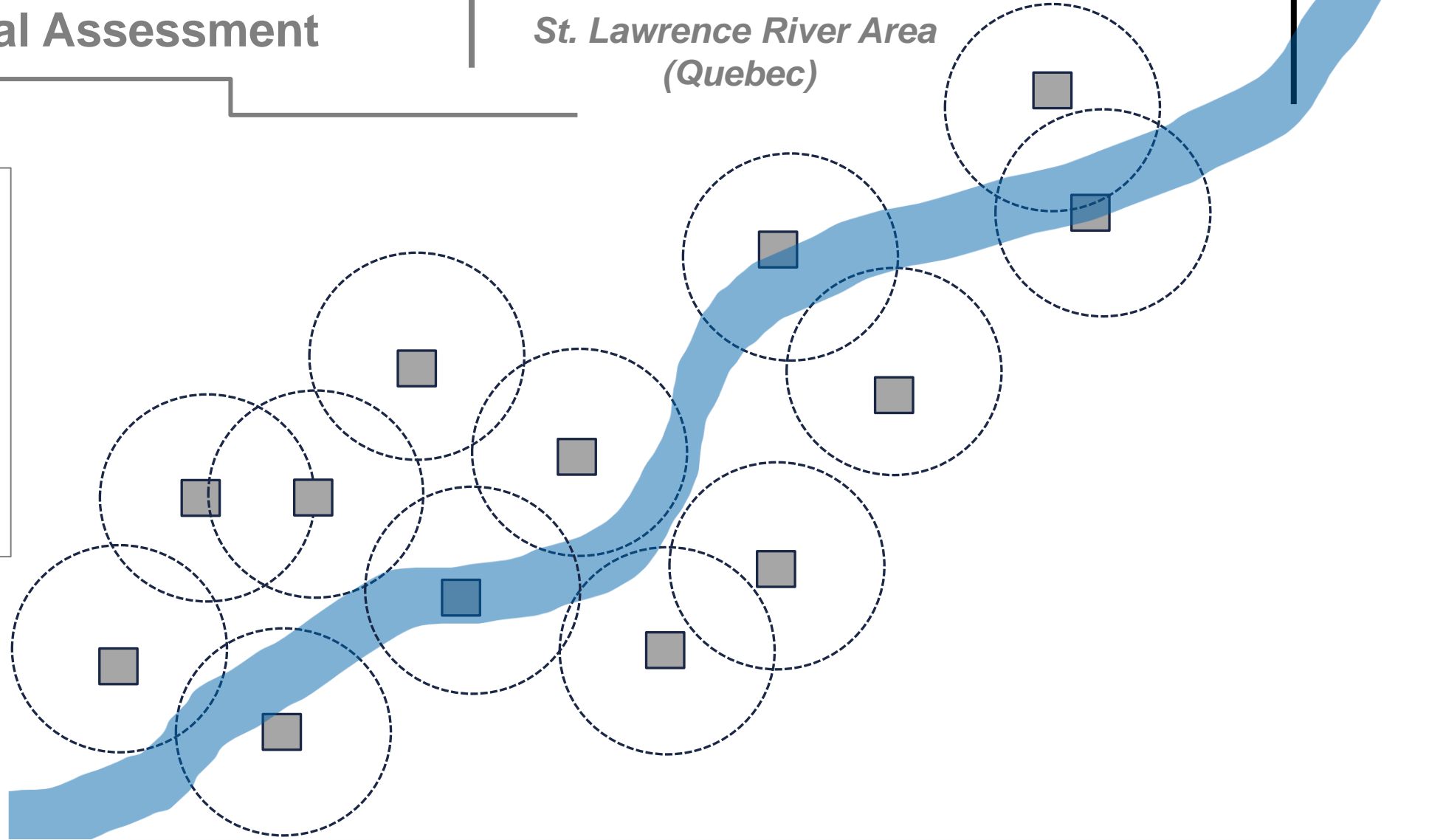
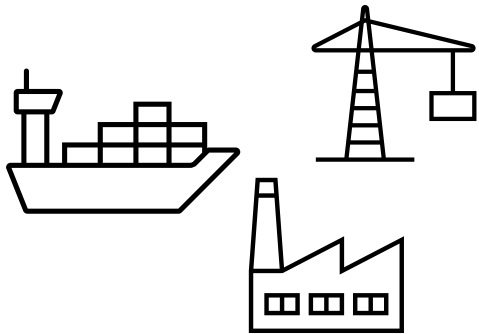
Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Canada

# Regional Assessment

## *St. Lawrence River Area (Quebec)*



# Regional Assessment

## Key Lessons to Date



1) Whether and how RA information and analysis will transfer to, and be influential in, subsequent project IAs (conduct, scoping) has yet to be tested in practice



2) RA is a better mechanism for assessing (and potentially managing) cumulative effects compared to project IAs alone –  
But the same complexities and analytical challenges will exist at the regional level



3) RA-provided information, analysis and “context” can help support cumulative effects *assessments* in subsequent project IAs – But does not improve their ability to *manage* regional cumulative effects



4) A key RA objective / outcome is the identification of “beyond project-level” approaches for managing complex and pervasive regional issues, and for making recommendations to the appropriate responsible authorities (governments)



5) RAs are likely to be most effective and influential where they have clear and established connections to *both* existing regional planning initiatives *and* project IA processes





6) Even with clear links between RA and regional planning, there are challenges if neither process establishes an overall vision for future development, or where there is a lack of specificity in RA outputs and how they are planned to be used





# Let's continue the conversation!

Message me your questions or comments in the IAIA25 app.

**#iaia25**

**Steve Bonnell, PhD**

*Head, Regional and Strategic Assessment Research*

*Impact Assessment Agency of Canada*

*[www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca](http://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca)*