



**Professional Geoscientists of Ontario (PGO)
Environmental Geoscience Subcommittee
Terms of Reference (ToR)**

Status:

The Environmental Geoscience Subcommittee (“Subcommittee” herein) is a subcommittee of the Professional Practice Committee (“PPC” herein), a Standing Committee of Council. The operational term of the Subcommittee is open-ended.

Mandate:

The mandate of the Subcommittee is to support the PPC in fulfilling its mandate, with respect to the practice of environmental geoscience, including developing guidelines for the practice of professional environmental geoscience, and undertaking other professional practice matters as may arise from time to time including commenting on regulatory changes affecting environmental geoscience professionals.

Composition/Organization

The Subcommittee composition and organization is as follows:

- The Subcommittee includes at least five registrants in good standing that are involved in the field of environmental geoscience (this may include the Chair and Vice-Chair), selected by the PPC in consideration of best practices and availability of resources.

Additional Clause:

- a) To provide oversight or guidance to the committee, the following individuals may attend or may be invited to attend any committee meeting in a non-voting, ex-officio capacity:
- i) The President or Chair of Council;
 - ii) The PGO CEO; or
 - iii) Other members of staff
- b) Unless approved by the Committee Chair, no more than one member of staff (not including the CEO) may be present at a meeting of a committee.
- c) Quorum does not include staff or other guests.

Committee Selection

- The Chair is to be nominated by the Subcommittee and approved by Professional Practice Committee (PPC) annually.
- The Vice-Chair is to be selected by the Subcommittee 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;
- Other members of the Subcommittee may be selected by PPC on recommendations from the Chair of the Subcommittee, as needed, from the roster of volunteers.
- In the event of a vacancy on the Subcommittee, the PPC, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee, may appoint an immediate replacement to the Subcommittee after consideration of that candidate's work experience and suitability.
- Temporary Subcommittee members may be selected from amongst registrants in good standing by PPC (and the Chair may make recommendations to PPC in this regard) to address specific professional practice issues.
- Observers and invited experts may attend Subcommittee meetings by request and/or invitation of the Chair.
- A member of the Subcommittee shall ipso facto cease to be a member of the Subcommittee.

Functions and Responsibilities

- The Subcommittee has the following functions and responsibilities:
- Review existing and proposed guidelines that may affect professional environmental geoscience practice in Ontario, and recommend their updating, revision or acceptance to the PPC.
- Where appointed by Council, provide representation on PPC through the Subcommittee Chair or Vice-Chair or designated appointee.
- Determine whether new guidelines are required to ensure professional environmental geoscience practice is protective of human health and the environment, and, as appropriate, recommend their development to PPC.
- Call upon Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo.) senior practitioners and qualified persons in the field of environmental geoscience to provide professional practice advice to Council, PGO committees and registrants, when requested/required.
- Liaise with regulators, other professional self-regulating organizations, technical organizations, university educators, etc., as requested by the PPC or Council, respecting issues affecting professional environmental geoscience practice.
- Ongoing liaison with environmental geoscience societies and the promotion of registration by practicing non-registered environmental geoscientists.

Outcomes and Deliverables

The Subcommittee has the following outcomes and deliverables:

- Recommendations and provision of environmental geoscience professional practice and ethics guidelines to be followed by PGO registrants.
- Presentation to the PPC and to Council of updates and key issues as requested.
- Participation in PPC by provision of a representative (Chair, Vice-Chair or designate) at PPC meetings.
- Periodic reporting to the PPC on findings and progress of the Subcommittee.
- Development for consideration of the Council of comment letters to the Province of Ontario on environmental registry postings relevant to professional environmental geoscience practice; and

- Provision of an annual formal report to the PPC for inclusion in a report to Council, which outlines the accomplishments of the Subcommittee and resource requirements, respecting financial and technical/member support annually to Council by February 28 following the December 31 year end.

Training Requirements

Committee members shall attend training provided 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.

Operational Considerations

Operations of the Subcommittee are expected to followed ordered procedures, which include:

- The Subcommittee reports to PPC and Council through its Chair.
- 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;
- Meetings will be held at the discretion of the Subcommittee Chair or as required by Council.
- At least one week's notice will be given prior to meeting, or on the occasion that a shorter time frame is required, sufficient rationale will be provided.
- Deliberations of the Subcommittee are considered confidential to Subcommittee members.
- The Chair or any Committee member that the Chair may designate shall record, prepare, and deliver minutes or notes of meetings to the PPC Chair, PGO CEO, PGO Registrar, and Committee members within 30 days of a Subcommittee meeting being held;
- Similarly, the documents and information considered by the Subcommittee 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 Subcommittee 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.

Authority

The authority of the Subcommittee comprises the following:

- With the assent of the PPC, the Subcommittee may establish working groups that include members who are not Committee members to address professional geoscience practice issues.
- The Subcommittee's term is open-ended.
- The Subcommittee has authority to respond to regulatory issues as represented by the Chair of the Subcommittee, and co-signed by the President and CEO / Executive Director.
- The Subcommittee should work cooperatively with the Geophysics Subcommittee, Geology Subcommittee, Geomorphology Subcommittee and Sustainability and Climate Change



Subcommittee when addressing geoscience practice issues that may overlap.

Review

The Governance Committee shall review the Terms of Reference of the Environmental Geoscience 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
Professional Practice Committee Terms of Reference

Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.1	Governance Committee	March 23, 2023	Incorporated the update to decision-making process approved by Council
1.2	Governance Committee	May 23, 2024	Incorporated the amendments approved by Council