



Dec. 2, 2021

Hon. Heather Stefanson
Premier of Manitoba
Room 204 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Premier Stefanson,

Congratulations on your appointment as Manitoba's 24th premier. We look forward to working collaboratively with you and your government to fulfill provincial responsibilities for the protection of Lake Winnipeg.

Five decades of peer-reviewed research by IISD-Experimental Lakes Area has demonstrated conclusively that phosphorus is the cause of algal growth in freshwater ecosystems. Lake Winnipeg is under threat from excess phosphorus. Increasingly frequent and severe algal blooms are impossible to ignore, with detrimental impacts on tourism and recreation, community water infrastructure and ecosystem health.

As you know, Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre (NEWPCC) – the single largest point source of phosphorus to Lake Winnipeg – is still non-compliant with the phosphorus limit set in 2005 through Manitoba Environment Act Licence 2684 RRR.

We recognize the new tone of cooperation you have set for your government and we applaud your actions so far to remove barriers to progress on NEWPCC upgrades. By advancing the City of Winnipeg's federal infrastructure funding proposal, and by rescinding the provincial requirement for a private-public delivery model, you have prevented further delays and reduced costs to the citizens of Winnipeg.

As Lake Winnipeg stakeholders and rightsholders, we remain focused on accelerating NEWPCC phosphorus compliance for the protection of Lake Winnipeg. Based on the most recent report from the City of Winnipeg, phosphorus compliance will not be achieved at NEWPCC until 2032 at the earliest; until then the treatment plant will remain non-compliant with long-established phosphorus licence limits.

Expedited phosphorus compliance is possible as biosolids capacity is expanded. Lack of biosolids capacity at NEWPCC is the primary barrier to achieving phosphorus compliance using approved interim phosphorus-reduction solutions. With increased capacity through the construction of Phase 2 Biosolids Facilities, interim phosphorus removal can be optimized to enable NEWPCC to meet the provincial phosphorus limit of 1 mg/L – much sooner and at much lower cost than the \$1.8 billion frequently reported in the media.

To this end, Manitoba Conservation and Climate must amend Environment Act Licence 2684 RRR to require compliance with the 1 mg/L phosphorus limit upon completion of Phase 2 Biosolids Facilities. This licence amendment will accelerate phosphorus compliance at NEWPCC by at least four years, with measurable benefits for the health of Lake Winnipeg. It will also provide clarity for project proponents and stakeholders, to ensure that approved interim phosphorus-removal solutions are fully integrated into the design and construction of Phase 2 Biosolids Facilities from the very beginning.

Lake Winnipeg matters deeply to Manitobans, and its health has far-reaching implications for the well-being of our communities. Under your leadership, Manitoba's government has an important opportunity to ensure the protection of this ecologically, economically and culturally important freshwater resource. We look forward to working with you to accelerate phosphorus compliance at the province's largest sewage treatment plant – efficiently and cost-effectively.

Sincerely,



Daniel Gladu Kanu
Director
LWIC



Dimple Roy
Director, Water Management
IISD



Alexis Kanu
Executive Director
LWF

cc: Hon. Sarah Guillemard, Minister of Conservation and Climate