

The Agreement states the purpose of the two signatories to be a commitment to a maximum effort to obtain a better understanding of the basin ecosystem and to reduce or eliminate the discharge of pollutants into the system, with a prohibition on the discharge of toxic pollutants. This purpose is to be met through programmes which, as under the original Agreement, have general and specific objectives. General objectives are broad descriptions of desirable water quality conditions, while specific objectives are designations of maximum or minimum desired levels of a substance or effect, to protect the beneficial uses of the waters.

Among the general objectives, are keeping the waters free from:

- sewage discharges, oil and other debris,
- materials which adversely affect colour, odour, taste or other conditions, and
- materials which produce toxic conditions or provide nutrients for the growth of algae which interfere with the beneficial uses of the Lakes.

The lengthy list of specific objectives, detailed in Annex I of the Agreement, provides that specified levels or concentrations of persistent or non-persistent chemical and physical substances not be exceeded to the injury of property or health. Based on work done by experts in both countries under the auspices of the Great Lakes Water Quality Board of the International Joint Commission, the specific objectives of the 1978 Agreement are far more comprehensive and stringent than those of the 1972 Agreement.

The Agreement outlines a number of programmes which are necessary to meet the general and specific objectives. Among these are programmes which call for: -

- the preparation of an inventory of pollution abatement requirements, expressed as effluent limitations,
- controls to be placed on the use of pest control products to limit their input into the Lakes; control of pollution from animal husbandry operations and from the hauling and disposal of liquid and solid wastes; and other measures in connection with land-use activities in an effort to reduce this significant contribution to the Lakes' pollution.
- the establishment of measures to control pollution from shipping sources, including both oil and vessel waste discharges.