

II Review of the Russian Environmental Approvals Process and Notes on Influential Officials and NGOs

1. Introduction

Information in this section of the report is designed to assist senior officials at the Canadian Embassy in Moscow in developing and maintaining contacts with Russian officials and NGO representatives who influence the process by which environmental projects are approved and implemented. The approvals process itself depends on variables such as the level of government at which a project is being considered, the officials involved, availability or lack of project financing, the political climate and the involvement of western partner companies. As well, whatever structure now exists at the MEPNR, at other federal ministries and at other levels of government respecting project approvals, will change significantly if the **The World Bank Project** is implemented as intended. Because of the **World Bank Project's** importance, officials who are likely to play a key role in its implementation are discussed under a separate heading in this section.

It should also be noted that, in general, the importance of the officials discussed in the section lies not necessarily in their formal authority to approve or deny environmental project proposals, but in their ability to provide advice and guidance concerning potential projects, identify officials