

2026 Canadian Science Symposium on Plastics

Taking Stock and Charting Future Directions for Canada's Plastics Science Agenda (CaPSA)

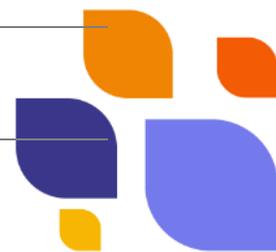
Dates: February 24–25, 2026 (Virtual)

Platform: Zoom (Invitation-only via Eventbrite)

Day 1

Focus: Themes 1 & 2 – Detection, Quantification & Characterization; Impacts on Wildlife, Human Health & the Environment

Time (ET)	Session	Purpose / Notes
10:00 – 10:05 am	Opening Remarks	Brief welcome from facilitator (Anton Holland)
10:05 – 10:15 am	Indigenous Elder's Opening Ceremony	Led by an Elder, as an opening Indigenous prayer and reflections.
10:15 – 10:25 am	Virtual Message from The Honourable Julie Aviva Dabrusin, Minister of Environment, Climate Change, and Nature	A virtual pre-recorded message contextualizing the symposium within Canada's circular plastics and zero-plastic waste goals.
10:25 – 10:45 am	Remarks from ECCC ADMs – Science and Technology Branch and Environmental Protection Branch	Reflections on plastics science and the challenge of addressing plastic pollution in Canada.
10:45 – 11:30 am	Panel 1 – Detection, Quantification & Characterization of Plastics and Associated Chemicals	Overview of the science, persistent challenges, and emerging techniques, with emphasis on methodological gaps, data comparability, and monitoring needs.
11:30 am – 12:15 pm	Breakout group 1 – Detection and Monitoring	Focused discussion on monitoring needs, methodological gaps, data harmonization, and supporting monitoring frameworks and capacities.
12:15 – 1:00 pm	Lunch Break	—



1:00 – 1:45 pm	Panel 2 – Environmental & Potential Human Health Impacts	Examination of how plastics and associated chemicals move through environmental systems and contribute to ecological and human exposure, including Indigenous and community-relevant pathways.
1:45 – 2:00 pm	Break	—
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Breakout group 2 – Exposure and Potential Impacts	Deep dive into exposure pathways, modelling approaches, harmonized data needs, and supporting risk assessment.
3:00 – 4:30 pm	Day 1 Closing Plenary & Synthesis	Extended synthesis of Day 1 discussions; rapporteur reflections, facilitated discussion, and participant input on emerging scientific priorities.



Day 2

Focus: Themes 3–5 – Design & Alternatives; Sustainable Use of Plastics; Waste Diversion & Recovery + Cross-Cutting Enablers

Time (ET)	Session	Purpose / Notes
10:00 – 10:15 am	Day 2 Kick-off & Day 1 Recap	Scene-setting for Day 2, including a recap of key insights from Day 1 and an overview of objectives and focus areas for the day ahead.
10:15 – 11:00 am	Panel 3 – Design, Innovation & Circular Solutions	Examination of scientific evidence underpinning materials design, product innovation, and circular solutions intended to reduce environmental and potential human health risks from plastics.
11:00 – 11:45 am	Breakout group 3 – Plastic Design and Alternatives	Focused discussion on plastics design and alternative materials, including design choices, additive considerations, and evidence gaps related to reducing environmental and potential human health risks.
11:45 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch Break	—
12:30 – 1:15 pm	Panel 4 – Plastics Science & Policy Integration	Exploration of how scientific evidence supports risk assessment and management, and policy measures across the plastics lifecycle.
1:15 – 1:20 pm	Micro-Break	—



1:20 – 2:05 pm	Breakout group 4 – Waste Diversion and Recovery	Discussion on the science and innovation relevant to waste diversion and value recovery of existing and future plastics, including research needs related to material flows, system performance, end-of-life behaviour, and how scientific insights can better inform environmentally sound waste management outcomes.
2:05 – 2:20 pm	Break	—
2:20 – 3:10 pm	Panel 5 – Cross-Cutting: Data, Collaboration & Knowledge Mobilization	Focus on harmonized methods, cross-program data integration and interoperability, modelling frameworks, digital infrastructure, and collaboration models that support policy-relevant plastics science.
3:10 – 3:50 pm	Breakout group 5 - Emerging Issues	Cross-theme synthesis on scientific priorities for the next 5–10 years; identification of emerging issues; reflections from participants.
3:50 – 4:15 pm	Closing Plenary	Extended synthesis of Day 2 discussions; rapporteur reflections, facilitated discussion, and participant input on emerging scientific priorities.
4:15 – 4:30 pm	Final Remarks (ECCC)	Final reflections from ECCC, outlining next steps and how symposium outcomes will inform future work under CaPSA.

