GLOSSARY

°C	The symbol for degree Celsius.
<	The symbol for less than.
>	The symbol for greater than.
%	The symbol for percent.
abandonment and reclamation	The act of permanently stopping operations, removing facilities and restoring land to a productive state.
abiotic	Nonliving components, physical or chemical, of the environment, such as temperature, light and nutrients.
Aboriginal person	Any Indian, Inuit or Métis person who was born in the Northwest Territories or who is descended from an Aboriginal person born in the Northwest Territories.
active layer	A surface layer of ground or soil above permafrost that is alternately frozen each winter and completely thawed each summer, i.e., seasonally frozen ground surface above the permafrost.
adverse effect	The impairment of, or damage to, the environment or health of humans, or damage to property, or loss of reasonable enjoyment of life or property.
aeolian	Materials eroded, transported or deposited by wind action, usually including poorly graded, well-sorted medium to fine sand and coarse silt that is sorted and noncompacted.
alluvial deposit	Pertaining to, or consisting of, alluvium, or material deposited by flowing water. Also known as *fluvial deposit.*
anchor fields	The three natural-gas fields, Niglintgak, Taglu and Parsons Lake, whose production will provide the initial volume of gas shipped in the project pipelines.
annual	A plant that completes its life cycle in a single growing season.
anthropogenic	Materials made or modified by humans.
APG	The abbreviation for Aboriginal Pipeline Group.

aspect	The compass orientation towards which a slope faces.
baseline	A surveyed condition that serves as a reference point to which later surveys or assessments are coordinated or correlated.
beaded stream	A stream with a series of small pools or lakes connected by short stream segments.
bedrock	Solid rock that underlies soil or any other unconsolidated surficial cover.
biophysical	Referring to the air, noise, aquatic (groundwater, hydrology, water quality and fisheries) and terrestrial (soils, landforms, permafrost, vegetation and wildlife) conditions in the project area.
biotic	Living components of the environment.
blanket	A thin, widespread sedimentary deposit of relatively uniform thickness that is relatively thin in relation to areal extent.
blanket slope drainage	A type of drainage that occurs in subdued topography where basin types are not definable. Water flows downslope in a sheet-like manner.
blocks	An angular particle larger than 256 mm.
bog	Peatlands consisting primarily of sphagnum mosses, with poor nutrient status and acidic conditions.
borrow site	An area that could be excavated to provide material, such as gravel or sand, to be used, where required, by the project.
Brunisol soils	Soils with horizons sufficiently developed to exclude them from the Regosolic Order, but lacking the degrees and kinds of horizon development specified for soils of the other orders.
bryophyte	Plants, including mosses, liverworts and hornworts, which are characterized by their lack of vascular tissues and some other terrestrial adaptations of vascular plants.
canopy	The cover of branches and foliage formed by tree crowns or the tallest layer of vegetation in an area.
channel	A natural or artificial waterway that periodically or continuously contains moving water, has a definite bed, and has banks that confine the water at low to moderate streamflow.

clay A soil particle less than 2 μm in diameter.

collapse scar That portion of a peatland where the whole or part of a palsa or peat plateau has thawed and collapsed to the level of the surrounding peatland. It is characterized by the absence of permafrost, and by vegetation different from that on both the previously unfrozen peatlands and the remnant permafrost peat landforms.

colluvial Pertaining to colluvium.

colluvium Loose, heterogeneous and incoherent deposit of soil material or rock fragments usually deposited by mass-wasting.

compliance monitoring Monitoring to ensure that:

- the environmental mitigation outlined in the environmental protection and reclamation plans is implemented
- work proceeds in compliance with regulations and the proponents' environmental policies

Construction Phase The phase of a project preceding the Operations Phase, during which project facilities and infrastructure are assembled and installed, and connected and tested to ensure that they operate as designed.

Cryosol soils Soils formed in either mineral or organic materials, with permafrost within 1 m of the surface, or within 2 m if the active layer of the soil profile has been strongly cryoturbated. They can be associated with wetlands, tundra or taiga forest conditions.

cryoturbation The churning and stirring of soil caused by repeated cycles of freezing and thawing. It includes frost heaving and surface subsiding during thaws.

cumulative effects Changes to the environment caused by an action, including projects and activities, in combination with other past, present and future human actions.

Cumulic Regosol soils Soils that develop in areas where periodic disturbance or deposition occurs.

decommissioning The act of taking a processing plant or facility out of service and isolating equipment, to prepare for routine maintenance work, suspending or abandoning.

deflation The removal of loose, dry, fine-grained particles by wind. This is a form of wind erosion.

delta	An area of alluvial deposits, usually triangular in shape, at the mouth of a river or stream.
deposit	Material left in a new position by a natural transporting agent such as water, wind, ice, or gravity, or by the activity of people.
depression	An area of lower elevation than the surrounding terrain, delimited by side slopes within the depression that are steeper than the surrounding terrain.
discontinuous permafrost	A zone of permafrost containing patches of unfrozen ground, such as beneath rivers and lakes.
disturbance	A force, e.g., fires, floods, landslides, that causes change in the structure, composition and ecological processes or any combination thereof, of a habitat or ecological system.
diversity	The variety and abundance of organisms and communities, and their patterns of distribution within an area.
drainage	The pattern followed by the waters of an area as they pass or flow off in surface or subsurface streams.
dune	A low mound, ridge, bank or hill of wind-blown, usually sand-sized material that occurs along shorelines and in deserts.
Dystric Brunisol soils	Soils that develop in acidic parent materials, usually noncarbonated, with no organic surface horizons.
earthflow	A mass-movement landform and process characterized by downslope translation of soil and weathered rock over a discrete basal shear surface, i.e., landslide, within well defined lateral boundaries.
ecological land classification	A means of classifying landscapes by integrating landforms, soils and vegetation components.
ecological zone	A regional ecological area used on the Mackenzie Gas Project to describe regional vegetation differences based on changes in climate, physiography, terrain, soil and permafrost with increasing latitude along the Mackenzie Valley. Also known as *ecozone*.
ecosystem	An integrated and stable association of all living organisms and the nonliving physical and chemical factors of their environment, within a defined physical location.

ecozone A regional ecological area used on the Mackenzie Gas Project to describe regional vegetation differences based on changes in climate, physiography, terrain, soil and permafrost with increasing latitude along the Mackenzie Valley. Also known as *ecological zone*.

effects monitoring Monitoring conducted to:

- confirm the accuracy of predicted effects
- determine the effectiveness of mitigation and enhancement measures

EIS The abbreviation for environmental impact statement.

ELC The abbreviation for ecological land classification.

endemic species A species that is native and indigenous to a particular area, and which has a limited geographic range.

environment The components of the earth, including:

- land, water and air, including all layers of the atmosphere
- all organic and inorganic matter and living organisms
- the interacting natural systems that include all components referred to in the previous bullets

environmental effect For a project, any change that the project might cause in the biophysical environment. Also, any change to the project that might be caused by the environment.

environmental impact assessment The process of evaluating the biophysical, social and economic effects of a proposed project.

environmental impact statement A report containing the environmental impact assessment.

ericaceous shrub A low, woody shrub in, or related to, the plant family Ericaceae, i.e., heather family.

erosion The wearing away of the land surface by running water, wind, ice or other geological agents, including such processes as gravitational creep.

esker A winding ridge of irregularly stratified sand, gravel and cobbles, deposited under a glacier by a rapidly flowing glacial stream.

Eutric Brunisol soils Soils that develop in basic parent materials, usually carbonated, with no organic surface horizons.

facilities Structures of the gathering and gas pipeline systems, including compressor and pump stations, block valves, pigging facilities, heater stations and meter stations.

fan A gently sloping, fan-shaped landscape feature usually found at a place where there is a decrease in gradient.

fen Low land, such as peat land, that is wholly or partly covered by water, especially in the upper regions of old estuaries and around lakes. These areas do not drain naturally.

fibric Having more than two-thirds of the organic soil material consisting of recognizable plant tissue.

Fibrisol soils Soils composed primarily of undecomposed fibric organic material. They are predominantly *Sphagnum* moss in peat deposits.

fine-grained A combination of well stratified clay, silt and fine sand.

floodplain A low-lying area adjacent to a river or lake that can be inundated during seasonally high water levels, such as floods.

fluvial Pertaining to, or produced by, the action of a stream or river. Also, pertaining to anything existing, growing or living in, or near, a river or stream.

fluvial deposit Pertaining to, or consisting of, material deposited by flowing water. Also known as *alluvial deposit*.

forb Any herbaceous plant, other than a grass, i.e., a weed or a broadleafed, non-woody plant.

frost boil A low mound of excess water and mud formed by local differential frost heaving at a location favourable for the formation of segregated ice, and accompanied by the absence of an insulating cover of vegetation.

frost bulb A frozen zone, typically formed around a chilled pipe, in otherwise unfrozen ground.

frost heave The raising of a surface caused by ice in the underlying soil. This movement results from alternate thawing and freezing. Frost heaving generates stress on vertical support members of pipelines in the Arctic and, as a result, also on the pipeline.

gas conditioning facility A facility located at each anchor field that collects raw gas from the wells, and dehydrates and conditions the product for transport through the gathering system.

gas pipeline The proposed gas pipeline that would extend from the Inuvik area facility, parallel to the NGL pipeline along the Mackenzie River to Norman Wells, and continue south to connect to an extension of the existing Alberta system south of the Northwest Territories–Alberta boundary. Also known as the *Mackenzie Valley Pipeline*.

gathering pipelines Four pipelines, also known as laterals, that transport natural gas and NGLs from the anchor fields to the Inuvik area facility. These include the Niglintgak lateral, Taglu lateral, Parsons Lake lateral and Storm Hills lateral.

gathering system A system of pipelines and associated facilities that include four gathering pipelines, the Inuvik area facility, the NGL pipeline and related facilities, such as valves, pig launchers and receivers.

genetic materials In relation to the soil or landform, the parent or source material for a soil type.

glaciofluvial Materials moved by glaciers and subsequently sorted and deposited by streams flowing from the melted ice.

glaciolacustrine Pertaining to lakes fed by melting glaciers, or to the deposits forming in the lakes.

gley Soil mottling, caused by partial oxidation of, and reduction of, constituent ferric iron compounds as a result of conditions of intermittent water saturation.

graminoid A plant with a grass-like growth form, including rushes, grasses and sedges, which are members of the Cyperaceae and Poaceae families.

gravel A loose or unconsolidated deposit of rounded particles between 2 and 64 mm, such as a mixture of cobbles and pebbles, which might include interstitial sand.

groundwater Subsurface water that is recharged by infiltration and enters streams through seepage and springs.

gully A long, narrow ravine formed by the modification of unconsolidated and consolidated surfaces by various processes such as running water, mass movement and snow avalanching.

ha	The metric symbol for hectare.
habitat	The place or environment where a plant or animal naturally and normally lives and grows.
heath	Level to undulating upland areas with a dense cover of low ericaceous shrubs and other dwarf shrubs.
horsetail	Plants with hollow and rush-like stems, and scale-like leaves forming sheaths at the nodes. They are of the genus *Equisetum* and are allied to the ferns.
hummock	A rounded or conical mound or hillock, usually of equal dimensions and not ridge-like.
hummocky	An assemblage of nonlinear, often chaotic forms that are rounded or irregular in cross-profile.
hydrology	The science dealing with the waters of the earth, including their properties, circulation, distribution and reaction with the environment.
ice-wedge polygon	A large nonsorted polygon bordered by intersecting ice-wedges occupying fissures formed by contraction of the ground and comprising polygonal patterns on ground underlain by permafrost.
infrastructure	Basic facilities, such as transportation, communications, power supplies and buildings, which enable an organization, project or community to function.
Inuvik area facility	The processing facility to be located near Inuvik where gas and liquids will be processed and separated, then delivered to the gas and NGL pipelines.
kame	A low, long, steep-sided mound of glacial drift, commonly stratified sand and gravel, deposited by a subglacial stream as an alluvial fan or delta at the terminal margin of a melting glacier.
kettle	A basin or bowl-shaped depression in surficial materials, often containing a lake that was formed by the melting of a detached block of stagnant ice buried in the morainal deposit.
keq/ha/a	The metric symbol for kiloequivalents per hectare per year.
key indicator	A factor used to measure the status of a valued component.

KI	The abbreviation for key indicator.
km	The metric symbol for kilometre.
km^2	The metric symbol for square kilometre.
lacustrine	Pertaining to, produced by, or inhabiting a lake or lakes.
lacustrine sediment	Sediment that has settled from suspension and underwater gravity flow, such as turbidity currents, in bodies of standing fresh water.
landform	A physical, recognizable, naturally formed feature of land, having a characteristic shape and produced by natural causes. Landforms include major forms such as plains, mountains or plateaus, and minor forms such as hills, valleys or alluvial fans.
landscape	The fundamental features of a specific heterogeneous land area, including the biological and physical interactions between and within its composite ecosystems.
lateral	A gathering pipeline that connects the production area facilities to the Inuvik area facility.
limestone	A sedimentary rock composed chiefly of calcium carbonate ($CaCO_3$), principally in the form of calcite.
LSA	The abbreviation for local study area.
Luvisol soils	Soils with an eluvial horizon and illuvial horizon. They develop under forest or forest–grassland transition, in a moderate to cool climate, and are associated with well drained, fine-textured parent materials.
m	The metric symbol for metre.
Mackenzie Gas Project	A project that will develop three onshore natural gas anchor fields in the Mackenzie Delta and transport natural gas by pipeline to market in northwestern Alberta by 2009. The project comprises the anchor fields, wells, gathering pipelines and associated facilities, work camps, material stockpiling and shipping sites, roads, borrow sites, and other associated infrastructure.
mean	The value or location of the central number or individual in a population, i.e., set of numbers, arranged in order of size.
median	The middle measurement in an ordered set of data.

meltwater Water derived from melting ice or snow, especially glacier ice.

mesic A soil with a mean annual temperature between 8 and 16°C, with a summer–winter variation of more than 5°C.

Mesisol soils Soils that are slightly more decomposed than Fibrisols. They contain moderately decomposed organic material and are found in areas that favour slightly greater rates of decomposition than Fibrisol locations.

µg/m^3 The metric symbol for micrograms per cubic metre.

microsite A small area or feature that exhibits localized characteristics different from the surrounding area, and therefore potentially supports plants or communities uncommon in the surrounding area, e.g., microsites created by a rock outcrop with thin soils, or the cool, shaded areas created in a site by the presence of slash.

mineral soil Soil containing primarily mineral materials, the presence of which predominantly determines the properties of the soil. Mineral soil generally evolves from fluvial, lacustrine or glacier-deposited parent materials, and except for an organic surface or litter layer, contains less than 30% organic material by weight.

mitigation The elimination, reduction, or control of a project's adverse effects, including restitution for any damage to the environment caused by such effects through avoidance, replacement, restoration, compensation or other means.

mm/a The metric symbol for millimetres per year.

moderately well-drained soil Soil from which water is removed slowly in relation to supply because of imperviousness or lack of gradient.

moisture regime The available moisture supply for plant growth on a relative scale, assessed through an integration of species composition and soil, and site characteristics.

monitoring Periodic inspection to meet the following objectives:

- observe and report on compliance with approval conditions
- confirm effectiveness of approved protection measures
- verify the accuracy of impact predictions
- identify any effects not predicted in the impact assessment

moraine An accumulation of glacial drift deposited by a glacier. It is well compacted to noncompacted material that is nonstratified and contains a heterogeneous mixture of particle sizes, often in a matrix of sand, silt and clay.

natural gas liquids Hydrocarbons that are gaseous in the reservoir, but that will separate out in liquid form at the pressures and temperatures at which separators normally operate. The liquids consist of varying proportions of butane, propane, pentane and heavier fractions, with little or no methane or ethane.

NGTL The abbreviation for NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd.

Niglintgak field The anchor field to be developed by Shell Canada Limited, which includes three well pads, one gas conditioning facility, flow lines and supporting infrastructure. The gas conditioning facility might be barge-based or land-based.

Niglintgak lateral The gathering pipeline connecting the Niglintgak gas conditioning facility to a connection point on the Taglu lateral at the outlet of the Taglu gas conditioning facility.

NO_x The chemical symbol for oxides of nitrogen.

nutrient An environmental substance, i.e., element or compound, such as nitrogen or phosphorus, that is necessary for the growth and development of plants and animals.

nutrient regime A measure of the essential nutrients available for plant growth, assessed through an integration of species composition and soil and site characteristics.

Operations Phase The phase of a project during which the pipeline and associated facilities are operated.

Organic Cryosol soil The soil of peatlands, underlain by permafrost.

organic matter The fraction of a soil that contains plant and animal residues in various stages of decomposition.

Organic soil Any soil comprising at least 30% organic matter. Most are saturated throughout the year and occur in poorly and very poorly drained depressions.

Orthic Regosol soil The soil that develops in areas where periodic disturbance or deposition occurs.

overburden	The loose soil, silt, sand, gravel or other unconsolidated materials overlying bedrock.
PAI	The abbreviation for potential acid input.
palsa	A mound of peat that develops as a result of the formation of a number of ice lenses beneath the surface of the ground.
parent material	The unconsolidated mineral and organic material from which soil develops.
Parsons Lake field	The anchor field to be developed by ConocoPhillips Canada (North) Limited and ExxonMobil Canada Properties. Initially, the field will consist of the north pad for the well sites and gas conditioning facility. A second well pad will be developed five to 10 years after the north pad.
Parsons Lake lateral	The gathering pipeline connecting the Parsons Lake gas conditioning facility to a connection point at the Storm Hills pigging facility.
patterned fen	Low-lying peatland characterized by patterned ridges and pools, e.g., strings aligned perpendicular to the water flow and parallel to surface elevation.
patterned ground	A collective term for the regular surface features, such as stone polygons, frost boils and stone stripes, characteristic of ground that is subject to intensive freeze–thaw action.
peat	An organic deposit consisting of decayed or partially decayed, humified plant materials that have decomposed in wet or waterlogged, anaerobic environments.
peatland	An organic wetland with accumulations of more than 40 cm of peat.
permafrost	Perennially frozen ground, occurring wherever the ground temperature remains below 0°C for two or more consecutive years.
pH	A measure of the relative acidity or alkalinity of a liquid. The pH scale ranges from 1 to 14, with 7 being neutral, 1 being the most acidic and 14 being the most alkaline.
physiognomic	Based on the external appearance, physical structure or growth form of a plant or plant community.

pig	An in-line scraper, i.e., brush, blade cutter or swab, that is forced through a pipeline by fluid pressure. The pig is used to remove scale, sand, water and other foreign matter from the interior surfaces of the pipe. In hydrostatic testing, the pig is used inside the line to push air ahead of the test water and to push water out after the test.
pig launcher	A facility on a pipeline for inserting and launching a pig
pig receiver	A piping arrangement whereby an incoming pig can be diverted into a receiving cylinder, isolated and then removed.
pingo	An ice-cored hill, forced up by frost-heaving hydrostatic pressure in an area underlain by permafrost. It usually forms in drained or partially drained lake basins.
pipeline corridor	The 1-km-wide area, defined for the purpose of the EIS biophysical baseline and effects assessment studies, that centres on the combined right-of-way for the gas and NGL pipelines, from the Inuvik area facility south to the NGTL interconnect facility.
plain	Any flat area at low elevation.
plant community	A distinct grouping of plant species often associated with a particular set of environment conditions, such as terrain, soil, permafrost and water. Also known as *vegetation community*.
polygon	Patterns of polygonal cracks formed on a level or gently sloping surface from the displacement of rocks, soil and peat due to frost or ice action.
polygonal ground	A ground surface consisting of polygonal arrangements, i.e., polygons, of rock, soil, and vegetation, formed on a level or gently sloping surface by frost action.
poorly drained soil	Soil from which water is removed so slowly in relation to supply that the soil remains wet for most of the time that it is not frozen.
potential acid input	The sum of the wet and dry deposition of sulphur and nitrogen compounds that have the potential to contribute to acidification of the receiving environment.

production area — The area that encompasses all project components located north of the Inuvik area facility, including the Niglintgak, Taglu and Parsons Lake fields, the gathering pipelines and associated facilities, infrastructure, and the 1-km-wide buffer area surrounding each of these project components, defined for the purpose of the EIS biophysical baseline and effects assessment studies.

progressive bank erosion — Bank erosion indicated by the presence of undercut banks.

project, the — The abbreviation for the Mackenzie Gas Project.

project proponents — The five organizations (Imperial Oil Resources Ventures Limited, the APG, ConocoPhillips Canada (North) Limited, Shell Canada Limited and ExxonMobil Canada Properties) that are undertaking the Mackenzie Gas Project.

quadrat — A sampling unit of a predefined size that is used to repeatedly sample vegetation in a given area. Quadrats can be rectangular, square or circular in shape and vary in size, depending on the vegetation community being sampled.

rapidly drained soil — Soil from which water is removed rapidly in relation to supply.

reclamation — The process of re-establishing a disturbed site to a former or other productive use, not necessarily to the same condition that existed before disturbance. The land capability might be at a level different, i.e., lower or higher, than that which existed before the disturbance, depending on the goal of the process. Reclamation includes the management of a disturbed site and revegetation where necessary.

Regosol soils — Azonal soils from deep unconsolidated deposits that have no definite genetic horizon. They do not exhibit weathering or horizon formation typical of other soils, and are associated with active landforms, such as floodplains, colluvial slopes, beaches, thaw slumps and debris flows.

relict — Referring to a topographic feature that remains after other parts of the feature have been removed or have disappeared. Also, pertaining to a mineral, structure, or feature of a rock which represents features of an earlier rock and which persists in spite of processes tending to destroy it, such as metamorphism.

residual effects — Environmental or socio-economic effects that remain after mitigation. Effects that are present after mitigation has been applied.

right-of-way The pipeline easement in which the pipeline will be installed and operated. The pipeline right-of-way width for the project will vary from 30 to 50 m, depending on pipe size and the number of pipes to be installed in the trench.

riparian Situated or dwelling on the margin of a river or other waterbody.

rolling An assemblage of parallel or sub-parallel linear forms with subdued relief.

RSA The abbreviation for regional study area.

sand Particles between 0.0625 and 2 mm in diameter.

SARA The abbreviation for *Species At Risk Act*.

scour Localized erosion of substrate from the streambed by flowing water, when water velocity is high.

sediment Fragmented material from weathered rocks and organic material that is suspended in, transported by, and eventually deposited by, air, water, or ice.

sedimentary rock Rock formed by the deposition and lithification of material derived from existing rocks.

seral stages The stages of ecological succession of a plant community, for example, from young stage to old stage. The characteristic sequence of biotic communities that successively occupy and replace each other, altering, in the process, some components of the physical environment over time.

shale A fine-grained laminated or fissile sedimentary rock made up of silt or clay-sized particles. It usually comprises about one-third quartz, one-third clay materials and one-third minerals, such as carbonates, iron oxides, feldspars and organic matter.

silt Fine soil particles between 0.002 and 0.05 mm in diameter, carried by flowing water and deposited as sediment on the bottom or shore of a lake or stream.

sinkhole A closed surface depression in regions of karst topography produced by the subsurface limestone geology or the collapse of cavern roofs.

slope	The percentage of vertical rise relative to the horizontal distance, e.g., a level site of 0° has a 0% slope, and 45° is equivalent to a 100% slope.
slump	Mass sliding of semi-consolidated sediment downslope under the influence of gravity.
soil horizon	A layer of surface soil or soil material parallel to the land surface, about 5 to 30 cm deep, that differs from adjacent layers in properties such as colour, structure, texture, consistency, and chemical, biological and mineralogical composition.
SO_2	The chemical symbol for sulphur dioxide.
solifluction	Slow gravitational downslope movement of saturated nonfrozen overburden across a frozen or otherwise impermeable substrate.
species at risk	An extirpated, endangered or threatened species or a species of special concern, as defined in the *Species at Risk Act*.
species composition	The species present in a given sampling area.
species diversity	A description of a biological community that includes both the number of species and their relative abundance. Provides a measure of the variation in the number of species in a region, depending on the variety of habitats and resources within habitats, and in part, on the degree of specialization of species to particular habitats and resources.
Storm Hills lateral	The gathering pipeline connecting the Storm Hills pigging facility to a connection point at the inlet of the Inuvik area facility.
string	A narrow part of well-drained, elevated land found in patterned wetlands, usually dominated by shrubs.
study area	The area within the spatial boundaries of the scope of the biophysical environmental effects assessment.
succession	The change in community composition over time, following a major disturbance.
Taglu field	The anchor field to be developed by Imperial Oil Resources Limited, consisting of one site that will include the well pads, gas conditioning facility, flow lines and supporting infrastructure.

Taglu lateral	The gathering pipeline connecting the Taglu gas conditioning facility to a connection point at the Storm Hills pigging facility.
taiga	A large temperate zone characterized by coniferous forests overlying glaciated areas, and areas of continuous and discontinuous permafrost.
terrace	A single step-like form or assemblages of step-like forms where each form consists of a scarp face and a horizontal or gently inclined surface above it.
textural classes	The physical categories of soil according to particle size, including blocks, boulder, clay, mixed fragments, fine-grained, gravel, organic, rubble, sand, till, silt.
texture	Refers to the size, shape and sorting of particles in sediments and the proportion and degree of decomposition of plant fibre in organic sediments.
thaw–flow slide	Slope failure or landslide caused by the thawing of permafrost (see also *earthflow*).
toe slope drainage	The drainage that occurs at the base of a slope, and is not confined by a basin or hollow. Water is received from upslope, sheet or channelled flow.
traditional knowledge	Cultural knowledge that is based on direct observation or information passed on orally from other community members, developed from centuries of experience of living off the land.
tundra	A vast treeless zone between the ice cap and the tree line of North America and Eurasia, characterized by a short growing season and permanently frozen subsoil. Tundra refers both to the region and to the vegetation growing within it.
Turbic Cryosol soils	Mineral soils strongly affected by cryoturbation or frost churning that generates various forms of patterned ground.
tussock	A tuft or clump of graminoid plants forming a small hump.
understorey	A foliage layer occurring beneath, and shaded by, the main canopy of a forest.
undifferentiated	Referring to a layered sequence of several types of surficial material often outcropping on steep, erosional (scarp) slopes or rounded crests.

undulating	Gently sloping hill and hollow with multidirectional slopes. Local relief is generally greater than 1 m.
upland	Terrain with sufficient topographical relief that the communities and processes of the site are not influenced by a surface or near-surface water table, and in which riparian vegetation or aquatic processes do not persist.
valued component	Characteristic or feature that represents important environmental conditions identified by assessment specialists, communities or stakeholders.
VC	The abbreviation for valued component.
variety	An individual or group usually fertile within the species to which it belongs, but differing from the species type in some qualities capable of perpetuation.
vascular	Referring to specialized tissues used for the transport of water, nutrients and photosynthates throughout a plant body.
vascular plant	Plants, such as grasses or trees, which have a vascular or conductive system.
vegetation community	A distinct grouping of plant species often associated with a particular set of environmental conditions such as terrain, soil, permafrost and water. Also known as *plant community*.
vegetation type	A vegetation community or complex of communities that can be identified on air photos and is large enough to map. Vegetation types are clearly defined and named.
very poorly drained soil	Soil from which water is removed from so slowly that the water table remains at or near the surface for most of the time when the soil is not frozen.
waterbody	A body of water up to the high-water mark, including canals, reservoirs, oceans and wetlands, but not including sewage or waste treatment lagoons.
well-drained soil	Soil from which water is removed readily, but not rapidly.
wetlands	A broad group of wet habitats where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water.
WHO	The abbreviation for the World Health Organization.