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Report 236

**Proposed biodiversity reserves for the
massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, the
knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles, the foothills of
Lac Guernesé, and the Collines de Brador**

TRANSLATION

Public Hearing Report

February 2007

Québec 

The concept of the environment

The commissions of the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement examine the projects submitted to them from the perspective of sustainable development, applying the concept of the environment defined by the higher courts, a concept that encompasses biophysical, social, economic and cultural aspects.

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Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement:

Édifice Lomer-Gouin	Phone: 418 643-7447
575, rue Saint-Amable, bureau 2.10	(Toll-free): 1 800 463-4732
Québec (Québec) G1R 6A6	

Website: www.bape.gouv.qc.ca
E-mail: communication@bape.gouv.qc.ca

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This document is a translation. In the event of a discrepancy, the French version prevails.

Québec, February 14, 2007

Mr. Claude Béchar
Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks
Édifce Marie-Guyart, 30^e étage
675, boulevard René-Lévesque Est
Québec (Québec) G1R 5V7

Minister,

It is with great pleasure that I submit the report on the investigation and public hearing held by the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement on four proposals to create biodiversity reserves in the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province, for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles, the foothills of Lac Guernesé, and the Collines de Brador.

The Commission was chaired by Pierre Béland, and began work on September 14, 2006. Upon completing its task, it concludes that permanent protection status should be granted to the proposed biodiversity reserve for the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles. With regard to the other three proposals, the Commission highlights several elements that must be considered before further action is taken.

The Commission believes that one of the proposed boundaries for the biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie should be reconsidered to create a more natural boundary line. In addition, it proposes that appropriate protection status be granted to the downstream stretch of Rivière Magpie between the southern boundary of the proposed reserve and the third waterfall.

For the proposed biodiversity reserves for the Collines de Brador and the foothills of Lac Guernesé, the Commission considers that two demands from the local communities should be dealt with before permanent protection status is granted. The first concerns the presence of cottages in a restricted area within one of the proposed reserves. The second concerns the disclosure and explanation of the motives that led the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, a full partner in the protected areas program, to agree to prohibit the development of natural resources within the areas considered.

...2

The Commission wishes to highlight the participation in the public hearing of the Innu communities of Ekuanitshit and Pakua Shipu, which have, for many generations, used the land set aside for the proposed reserves. They demonstrated their knowledge of the area and interest in protecting natural ecosystems, and stated their demands regarding the current public consultation process and the procedure for selecting land to be set aside, which they consider inappropriate in the context of their outstanding land claims.

The Commission, while recognizing the soundness of setting land aside for the protection of biodiversity in Québec and supporting the action plan of the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs, notes that opposition to the projects under examination during the public hearing stemmed in part from the fact that there was no prior consultation concerning the choice of the land to be granted protection status. In addition, it would be advisable that the public be informed shortly of the proposed mechanisms for the management and funding of the permanent biodiversity reserves.

Yours sincerely,

William J. Cosgrove
President

Québec, February 12, 2007

Mr. William J. Cosgrove
President
Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement
Édifice Lomer-Gouin
575, rue Saint-Amable, bureau 2.10
Québec (Québec) G1R 6A6

Dear Sir,

It is my pleasure to submit the report on the investigation and public hearing carried out by the Commission responsible for the public consultation on four projects to create biodiversity reserves in the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province, namely the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles, the foothills of Lac Guernesé, and the Collines de Brador.

The Commission, after completing its analysis, concludes that permanent protection status could be granted to the proposed biodiversity reserve of the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles. With regard to the other three projects, the Commission highlights several elements that should be considered before proceeding further, and which relate to proposed boundaries and other concerns raised by participants.

The Commission considers appropriate to modify the boundary for one sector on the west side of the biodiversity reserve of the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie so as to be more consistent with the natural ecosystem and landscape criteria. Representations were also made concerning the stretch of Rivière Magpie between the southern boundary of the proposed biodiversity reserve and the third waterfall, in accordance with the views expressed by participants at a previous BAPE public hearing concerning hydroelectric development on the same river. As a result, the Commission proposes that this stretch of river be granted protection status, so as to preserve its wilderness and internationally-recognized potential for recreation and tourism.

...2

The proposed biodiversity reserves for the Collines de Brador and the foothills of Lac Guernesé were challenged by participants living in the vicinity. This opposition was partly due to the fact that the land, among the first to be set aside in Québec, was selected and delimited without consulting the communities concerned. The Commission considers that before protection status is granted, two demands from the local communities should be dealt with. The first concerns the presence of cottages in a restricted area within one of the reserves; the need to protect this sector should be re-assessed. The second concerns disclosure and explanation of the motives that led the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, a full partner in the protected areas program, to agree to prohibit the exploitation of natural resources within the areas considered.

The Commission wishes to stress the participation in the public hearing of the Innu communities of Ekuanitshit and Pakua Shipu, which have been using for many generations the land set aside for the proposed reserves. They demonstrated their knowledge of the area and interest in the protection of natural ecosystems, and stated their demands for a consultation and land selection process which they would consider appropriate in the context of their land claims with the federal and provincial governments.

The Commission, while recognizing the soundness of the decision made to set land aside for the protection of biodiversity in Québec and supporting the action plan of the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs, considers that it would be advisable for the government to reaffirm its commitment to the program, and that the public be shortly informed of the proposed mechanisms for the management and funding of the permanent biodiversity reserves.

I would like to thank the entire Commission team, whose sustained work led to a successful conclusion a consultation process in a remote but magnificent area that is home to varied communities that are dispersed and isolated from each other through geography.

Yours sincerely,

Pierre Béland
Commission Chair

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Introduction

On August 10, 2006, the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks, Claude Béchar, entrusted the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) with two mandates to conduct a public consultation concerning four proposed biodiversity reserves in the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province.

The BAPE president set up a single Commission to carry out both mandates. The relevant information was made available to the public for a 30-day period beginning on September 14, 2006. The first part of the public hearing was held from October 16 to 19, with sittings in the municipalities of Rivière-Saint-Jean and Blanc-Sablon, the Innu community of Pakua Shipu, and the municipality of Saint-Augustin. The sitting at Rivière Saint-Jean was broadcast live as an audio webcast on the BAPE website. The second part of the public hearing, from November 21 to 23, involved sittings in the municipalities of Havre-Saint-Pierre and Blanc-Sablon and the Innu community of Pakua Shipu. The Commission received 25 written briefs and six verbal presentations, and heard the opinions and comments of several other participants.

The four proposals under examination

The four areas examined during the public consultation process were set aside in 2003 as proposed biodiversity reserves under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01). All the land is in the domain of the State in Québec's easternmost region, the Basse-Côte-Nord. Three of the areas, the proposed biodiversity reserves for massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles, and the foothills of Lac Guernesé (Guernsey Lake), lie within the Minganie regional county municipality along the non-definitive boundary established in 1927 by the Privy Council between Québec and Newfoundland and Labrador. The fourth area, the Collines de Brador (Brador Hills), is located in the municipality of Blanc-Sablon, around fifteen kilometres north of the village; it sits on the boundary between Minganie regional county municipality and the Basse-Côte-Nord "territoire équivalent¹".

Through these four projects, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs intends to make a substantial contribution to the

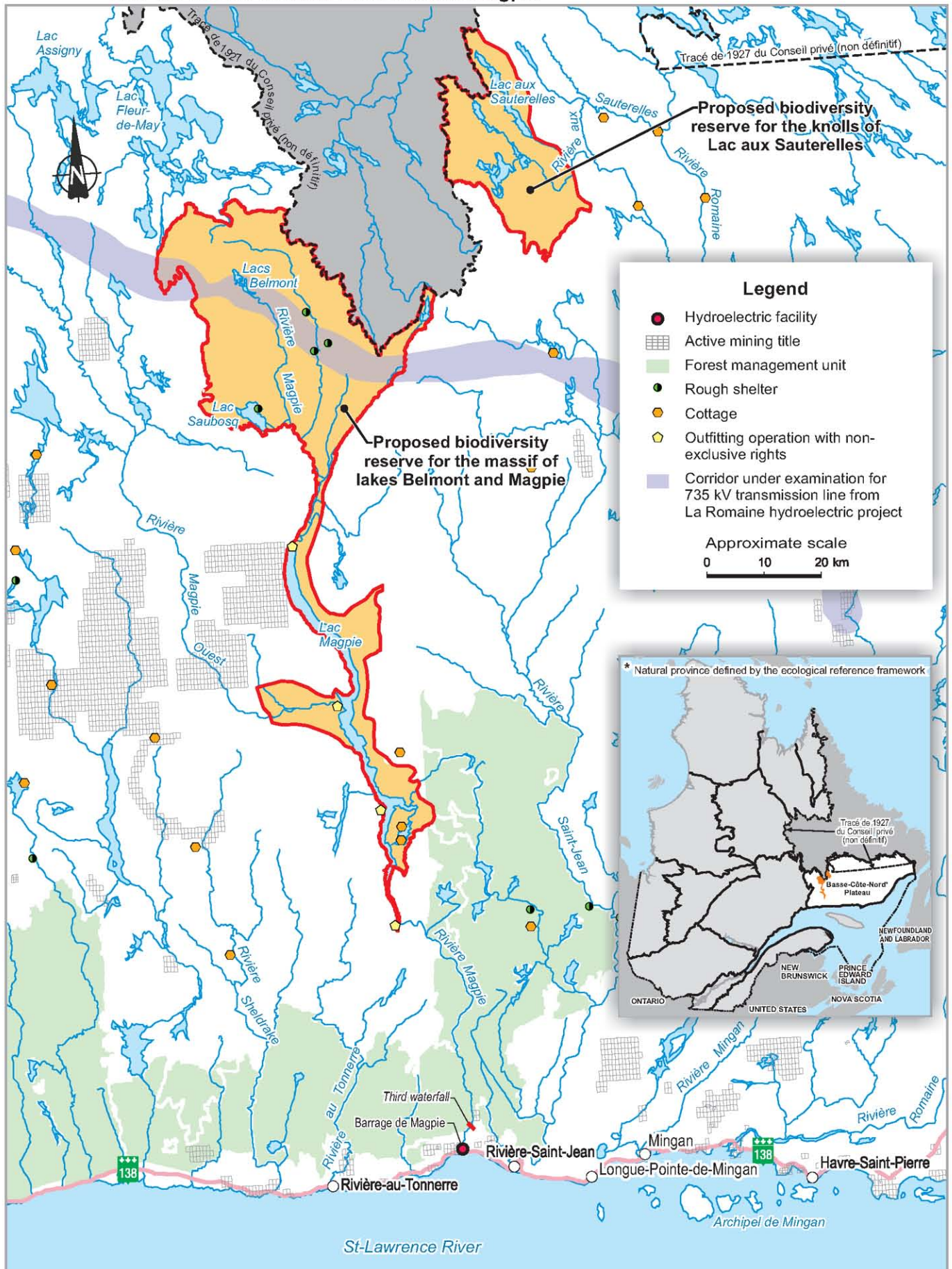
1. A "territoire équivalent" is the name given to an area that is not within a regional county municipality, but that is equivalent to an RCM, in order to complete the territorial coverage of Québec.

protection of representative terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province, a region that has a cold, subpolar, subhumid climate with a short growing season. The climate determines the vegetation of the region, which consists predominantly of black spruce stands with moss or lichens and boreal forest. The geology, relief and Quaternary deposits are the physical features that led to the selection of the two westernmost projects. The proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie has an area of 1 575 km². It is located roughly 50 km north of the municipality of Rivière-Saint-Jean and northwest of Havre-Saint-Pierre, and includes the central portion of the watershed of Rivière Magpie (Magpie River) (Figure 1). One particularly interesting natural element is the U-shaped glacial valley containing habitats suitable for vulnerable wildlife species including woodland caribou, golden eagle and wolverine. The proposed reserve also contains the most northerly and easterly jack pine stands in Québec, as well as white spruce stands in a mountainous, subalpine environment. The proposed biodiversity reserve for the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles has an area of 481 km² and consists of a series of well-drained knolls resulting from glaciation, protecting part of the watershed of Rivière Romaine (Romaine River).

The proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé is roughly 30 km north of the shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, where several communities are scattered between Rivière Saint-Augustin and Blanc-Sablon (Figure 2). The reserve covers 2 022 km² on a highly dissected plateau where hills and encased valleys alternate with numerous lakes and the upper stretches of several salmon rivers, the largest of which is Rivière Saint-Paul. The proposed reserve is also noted for the historical presence of the Saint-Augustin caribou herd. The western section of the proposed biodiversity reserve is covered in softwood stands more than 90 years old, whereas to the east a dry heath covers the slopes and summits of the low hills.

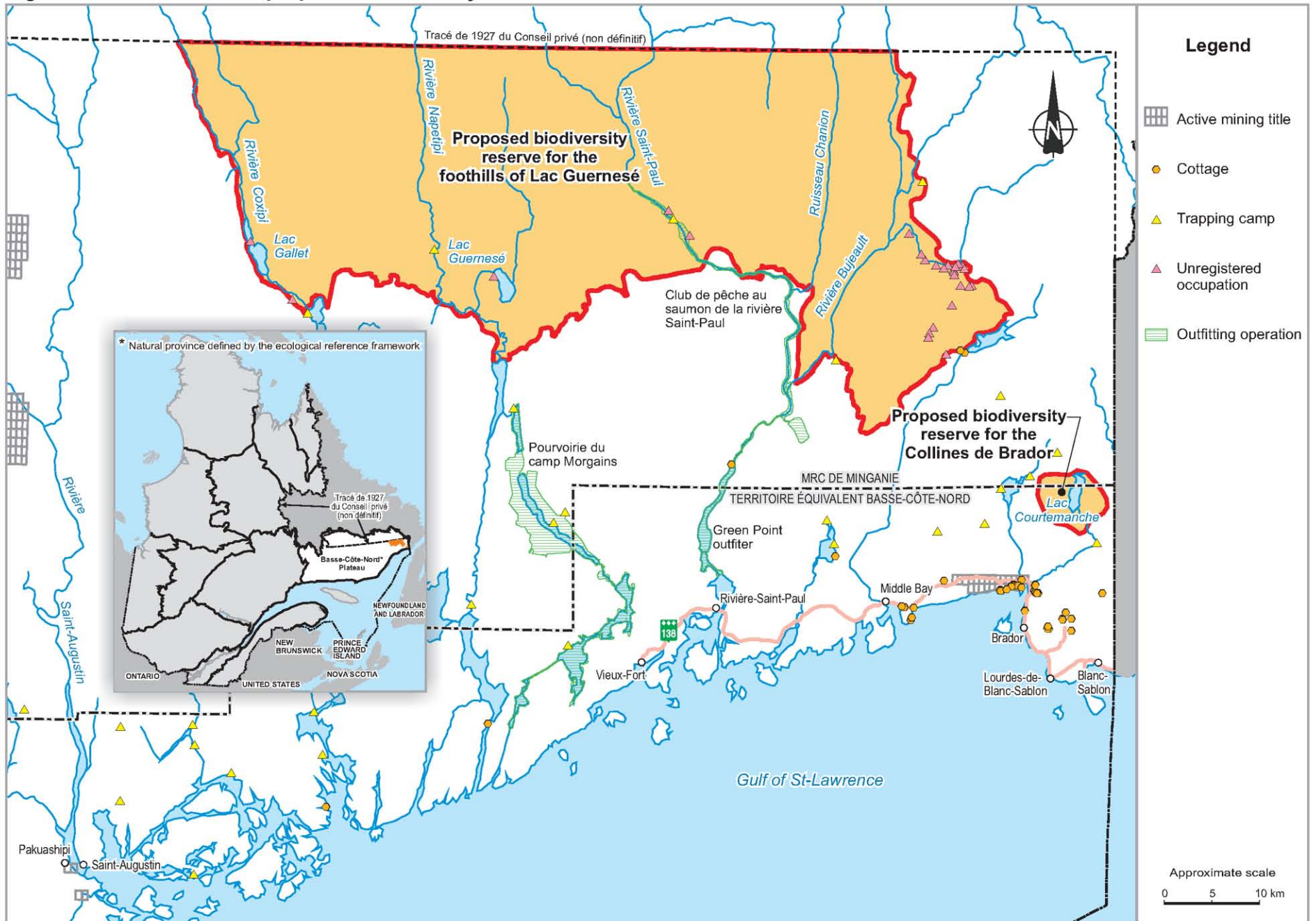
The main reason for the small proposed biodiversity reserve for the Collines de Brador (32 km²) is the protection of an exceptional sample of tabular limestone hills, an unusual geological formation in this natural province, emerging from the Precambrian granite basement covering the region. The vegetation of low-growing conifers and low, shrubby heath, or creeping shrubs with lichens, includes plant species typically associated with soils derived from limestone outcroppings. The area also protects part of the watershed of a salmon river.

Figure 1 Location of the proposed biodiversity reserves for the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles and the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie



Source : adapted from PR3cd, appendices 2 and 3 ; DD1, p. 4 and 5.

Figure 2 Location of the proposed biodiversity reserves for the foothills of Lac Guernesé and the Collines de Brador



Source: adapted from PR3ab, appendix 4; DB2.1; regional map of the Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions [online (January 25, 2007) : www.mamr.gouv.qc.ca/publications/cartotheque/region_09.pdf].

Chapter 1 **Biodiversity protection**

In this chapter, the Commission provides an overview of the context, objectives and implementation schedule for the network of protected areas in Québec, with a special focus on biodiversity reserves. It makes various observations concerning the current state of the network and the procedure for creating and managing the biodiversity reserves examined during the public consultation process.

A strategy based on a legislative framework

The Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 identified the creation of protected areas as an essential element in the preservation of the planet's biodiversity. The Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted by a large majority of member states, including Canada, during the UN Conference on Environment and Development¹. In Québec, the implementation of the Convention led to an initial strategy, in 1996, along with a four-year action plan. In 2000, in the *Québec Strategy on Protected Areas*, the Québec government undertook to create a network of protected areas by

- adding to the existing system of protected areas to cover a total of at least 8% of Québec's territory by 2005;
- ensuring that the protected areas were representative of biodiversity throughout Québec;
- taking into consideration the socio-economic concerns of the populations concerned.

These guidelines were extended until 2008 in the document *Briller parmi les meilleurs* (DA6, p. 1).

On December 19, 2002, the National Assembly of Québec passed the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* which, in section 1, states that its object is to facilitate the establishment of a network of protected areas to “contribute to the objective of safeguarding the character, diversity and integrity of Québec's natural heritage through measures to protect its biological diversity and the life-sustaining elements of

1. <www.biodiv.org/world/parties.asp> (January 22, 2007).

natural settings.” The Act defines nine types of protection status, including the status of biodiversity reserve, in addition to those previously defined.

[Translation] In all, Québec’s protected areas toolbox contains 26 different types of status¹ [...]. Twenty-six types of status have been defined under various Acts. For example, under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, the types of protection status include ecological reserve, proposed biodiversity reserve, proposed aquatic reserve, man-made landscape and nature reserve. [...] The *Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife* defines other types of status. The *Forest Act* describes exceptional forest ecosystems. In short, there exists a wide range of possible types of status.
(Mr. Patrick Beaudesne, DT1, p. 75)

Twelve types of status are managed by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs (PR3ab, p. iii), at least six by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune², and the others by the private sector or a provincial or federal government department. During the public hearings, the participants used the terms reserve, biodiversity reserve, national park, protected area and others, interchangeably, to refer to the areas under examination. They also showed some confusion about the responsibilities of the various government departments for protecting these areas and about current and future regulations.

- ◆ **Opinion** — *Given that it is difficult for the general public to differentiate between the various types of protection status, the Commission considers that the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs should produce an information document setting out the management process for each type of status in terms of the repercussions for land users, especially with regard to permitted activities.*

Biodiversity reserves

The *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* defines a biodiversity reserve as “an area established in order to maintain biodiversity and in particular an area established to preserve a natural monument – a physical formation or group of formations – and an area established as a representative sample of the biological diversity of the various natural regions of Québec” (section 2).

The Act establishes a two-stage process for the designation of a protected area with the status of biodiversity reserve. First, the minister responsible assigns temporary protection status to an area, after setting its boundaries and preparing a conservation

1. Another type of status, introduced on October 1, 2006, brings the total to 27 (DA9).
2. <www.mrnf.gouv.qc.ca/aires/index.jsp> (January 22, 2007).

plan. The area becomes a “proposed biodiversity reserve”. The land may be set aside in this way for a period of up to four years, which may be renewed or extended, but may not exceed a total of six years without government authorization. During this time, the minister may recommend that the Government assign permanent protection status to all or part of the area set aside. The four reserves under examination were listed in the Schedule to the Act and were assigned temporary protection status in June 2003. Unless the period of protection is renewed or extended, they must have received permanent protection status by June 2007.

Selection of land under protection

To select and delimit the land placed under protection, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs uses an “ecological reference framework for assessing ecosystem representativeness” (Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT1, p. 9). As a first step, Québec is divided into thirteen natural provinces, each subdivided into areas on the basis of coherent natural formations, called natural regions. Next, the intrinsic ecological value of each sector is measured in terms of its uniqueness, or its degree of representativeness of the natural region. This elimination process leads to the selection of a number of areas of special interest based on biophysical criteria, such as physiography, vegetation, and ecosystems. It is also possible for members of the general public to propose areas of special interest for consideration.

A summary analysis of the potential socio-economic impact is carried out in collaboration with the government departments concerned, in particular the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune. The procedure is designed to assess, among other things, whether setting aside the land will result in a loss of mining, forest or hydroelectric potential, and the consequences for the communities concerned (DQ1.2, p. 3 to 6). At this stage, an area may be dropped, or its boundaries may be modified. The remaining areas may receive temporary protection status under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*. To create a network of protected areas that is representative of all forms of biodiversity, the Government intends to protect 8% of the area of each of the natural provinces, and at least one area in each natural region (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 54; Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT1, p. 9).

The contribution of the four projects to the network of protected areas

The four proposed biodiversity reserves examined during the public hearing add 4% to the total protected area within the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province. The

two projects for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie and the foothills of Lac Guernesé account for practically all of this percentage. Together, the protected areas in this natural province cover 10.5% of its total area (PR3ab, p. 1; PR3cd, p. 1; DA6, p. 2).

According to the spokesperson for the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs, a total of almost 40 000 km² has been added to the network of protected areas since the adoption of the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, but the current network covers only 5.8% of Québec's total territory (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 80; DA6, p. 2). The Commission notes that, to date, only one of the 39 areas set aside for a biodiversity reserve with temporary protection status has since received permanent protection status¹.

According to the Act, protected areas must be listed and accounted for in a register kept by the Minister. It appears that the Minister is considering removing some areas from the register because they do not comply with the standards recognized by the World Conservation Union as specified in the Act:

[Translation] When the Québec government drew up an overview of protected areas in 1999, three large sectors [...] were considered to be protected areas: the two caribou calving areas situated in the Far North [...], and [...] Anticosti Island [...]. The implementation of the register caused the Government to reconsider some areas [...].

(Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 74 and 75)

The withdrawal of these three areas reduced the total area of the network of protected areas considerably, and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society now estimates it at no more than 3.4% of Québec's territory (DM10, p. 2). The Commission agrees that the register should contain only protected areas that meet internationally-recognized standards.

- ◆ *The Commission observes that Québec is a long way from achieving the objective of protecting 8% of its territory, which represents the minimum threshold. Although the 2005 deadline has been set back to 2008, the sum of the protected areas with internationally-recognized status is apparently below 4% and there is a real risk that the objective will not be achieved within the prescribed timeframe.*

1. The biodiversity reserve covering Lacs-Vaudray-et-Joannès, designated by Order in Council 1114-2006 dated December 6, 2006 (*Gazette officielle du Québec*, Part 2, 3 January 2007, p. 5).

Biodiversity reserve management

The designation of a biodiversity reserve generates a number of legal obligations that the Commission will discuss here with regard to the four projects under examination.

Conservation plan and action plan

The protection of biodiversity is the main objective of a biodiversity reserve where, “[translation] unlike a park, for example, the goal is not to develop resources, or to create a tourist attraction or recreational destination” (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 69). The key document for the management of a biodiversity reserve is its conservation plan. Sections 27 and 30 of the Act stipulate that a plan must be prepared as soon as the land is set aside, and forwarded to every government body that participated in the preparation of the plan, and to the regional and local municipal authorities concerned. The plan must contain a description of the land, the conservation measures and zoning for the various types of protection proposed, the activities that are permitted or prohibited, including the conditions on which permitted activities may be carried on, and the alternative resolution mechanisms for disputes involving land occupancy or resource development (section 33).

The conservation plans for the four proposed biodiversity reserves were published in September 2003¹. In accordance with section 34 of the Act, they specify the activities prohibited within the reserves:

- mining, and gas or petroleum development;
- forest management within the meaning of section 3 of the *Forest Act* (R.S.Q., c. F-4.1);
- the development of hydraulic resources and any production of energy on a commercial or industrial basis (therefore including wind energy).

A conservation plan may also prohibit other activities or set the conditions on which they may be authorized. In the projects under examination, any new allocation of a right to occupy land for vacation resort purposes, as well as earthwork or construction work, will be prohibited, as will mining, gas and petroleum exploration, brine and underground reservoir exploration, prospecting, and digging or boring activities. All other activities will be permitted, subject to the conditions set out in the conservation plan. This includes forestry activities to meet domestic needs or to maintain

1. An initial draft regulation, “Modifications aux plans de conservation des réserves de biodiversité et aquatiques projetées”, was published in the *Gazette officielle du Québec* on July 6, 2005. The amendments made, subject to Government approval, were designed to specify permitted and prohibited activities in the proposed reserves and to settle some of the problems that have emerged since their creation.

biodiversity. To prepare for the assigning of permanent protection status to the four biodiversity reserve projects, a more elaborate version of the conservation plans was submitted in September 2006, which maintains the previous rules on permitted and prohibited activities.

The Act leaves the Minister free to specify the content of a conservation plan, as well as improvements or amendments to the plan, and the mechanisms for its implementation. For this purpose, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs will draft “[translation] an action plan setting out the aims of the conservation plan in terms of objectives and guiding the management of the biodiversity reserve” (DQ1.2, p. 6). This action plan will “[translation] give priority to the conservation and development measures to be considered over the short, medium and long term. It may be prepared immediately after the assignment of permanent status as a biodiversity reserve” (PR3ab, p. 28).

- ◆ *The Commission notes that the primary purpose of a biodiversity reserve is to maintain biodiversity and not to create a project with economic and recreational goals.*

Compulsory consultation

The process leading to the creation of a proposed biodiversity reserve includes several consultation mechanisms, for both the general public and the government departments and bodies concerned. Before a designation is made, section 27 of the Act requires the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks to consult the government departments and bodies concerned with respect to the selection of land, the choice of protection status, and the conservation plan. The Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Minister of Culture and Communications, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Regions and the Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade are expressly named.

Sections 37 and 39 of the Act stipulate that a public consultation must be held before a proposal on permanent protection status is made to the Government. The BAPE or one or more persons the Minister designates as commissioners may be entrusted with the mandate to hold a public consultation. The Government may, however, exempt any proposal it designates from the consultation process, in particular where it considers that other means may be used to clarify the various issues raised by the proposal.

In 2002, the *Plan d'action stratégique du Québec sur les aires protégées* (“*strategic action plan for protected areas in Québec*”) stated that a public consultation would be

held after the selection of land to be set aside. The Government wished to “[translation] take into account the concerns of various stakeholders affected by the expansion of the network of protected areas”, in particular with regard to the “socio-economic consequences” of setting aside land for protected areas (DA10, p. 10). The document also specified that “[translation] the population and bodies concerned will be able to give their opinion on the regional management and conservation guidelines, the boundaries of the land set aside, the protection measures and the management methods”. The plan of action recognizes that this is a collective challenge, since “[translation] the addition of new protected areas [...] requires a display of solidarity by all stakeholders and interest groups” (*ibid.*, p. 8).

At the public hearing, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs informed the Commission of a recent procedure which involves consulting the population before land is selected to be set aside. This procedure was not applied for the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province, the first region where land was set aside:

[Translation] [...] this is the first generation of reserves to be announced [...], in all the other natural provinces, as a first step, there was an information tour where the general public, including individuals, groups, industries, or organizations like RCMs, were asked to propose territories of potential interest [...] For the Minganie RCM, it is true that there was no prior consultation and no information tour.
(Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 38 and 39)

It was only after the land for the four proposed reserves was set aside that, between the summer of 2004 and the spring of 2006, the Ministère held public information sessions in various Native and non-Native communities along the Basse-Côte-Nord, as well as targeted meetings with the RCM, with municipal councils and with economic development agencies working in the region (DA8).

Several participants in the public hearings complained about this approach, including the Innu community of Pakua Shipu, the Minganie RCM, Nature Québec/UQCN and the mayor of Bonne-Espérance (DM22, p. 6; Ms. Stéphanie Élias, DT1, p. 38; DM13.1, p. 1 and 2; Mr. Lionel Roberts, DT6, p. 38). One citizen gave his own illustration of a widely-shared perception: “We have got somebody in 2003, do not know who it is, decided : the Basse-Côte-Nord, we are going to give you guys as a reserve, this is going to be a reserve” (Mr. Fernand Dumas, DT4, p. 17). Despite the steps taken by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs, the Conseil des maires de la Basse-Côte-Nord (council of Lower North Shore mayors) stated that two of its five member municipalities were neither informed of nor consulted on the four proposed reserves (DA8; DM20, p. 1).

The Commission stresses that the feeling of belonging that results from the occupation and use in all seasons of a vast territory outside municipal boundaries is an essential cultural dimension of the Basse-Côte-Nord. The tension expressed during the public hearing demonstrates the need to obtain the prior support of the regional communities concerning the choice of areas to be included in the network of biodiversity reserves. If this support is not obtained, the consultation held prior to the assignment of permanent status cannot make any progress concerning the main issue of biodiversity protection.

- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission considers that areas should be selected for protection as biodiversity reserves only with the prior support of the regional communities; if this support is not obtained, the consultation held prior to the assignment of permanent status cannot make any progress on the issue of biodiversity protection.*

Management and financing of biodiversity reserves

During the previous BAPE public hearings on protected areas, the management concept proposed by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs was based on a "conseil de conservation et de mise en valeur" (conservation and development council) (reports 181, 197, 202 and 213). Comments were made during the hearings on the operation, composition, financing and powers of these councils.

According to the spokesperson for the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs, the management of biodiversity reserves is a major issue, but one that has not yet been resolved:

[Translation] [...] the management issue [...] will keep our teams and regions occupied for the next 5, 10, 15, 20 or 30 years [...] it is a little too soon to answer specific questions, in other words who is going to monitor biodiversity and how everything will be organized. [...] there's a taskforce at the Ministère, working with the regional offices, looking at the various management aspects [...].
(Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 34 and 35)

Although the *Plan d'action stratégique du Québec sur les aires protégées* already states that the public will be consulted on the management methods used in biodiversity reserves, the Ministère goes even further:

[Translation] [...] one of the objectives is participatory management, because it is clear that, despite all our good intentions, we will not be able to manage the areas effectively from Québec City. It will require the involvement of people from the community, and their knowledge.
(*Ibid.*, p. 35)

In the proposed conservation plans for the four projects under examination, the Commission notes that the concept of conservation and development council has disappeared (PR3ab, p. 28 and PR3cd, p. 28). The regional office of the Ministère would be responsible for defining participation by the local communities. After the public hearing, the Ministère reiterated its firm intention of drafting the plan of action for the four projects as part of a participatory process that “[translation] takes regional realities and community expectations into account” (DQ1.2, p. 6). It recognizes that participation offers a guarantee for the achievement of the conservation and development objectives for the biodiversity reserves. However, the Commission notes that no concrete proposal has yet been made.

The users of the territory, considering that they will naturally become partners in the management of the biodiversity reserves, made several suggestions concerning ways to collaborate. Some proposed a local body responsible for the management and monitoring of biodiversity, or a regional committee based on the conservation councils (Mr. Alain Carpentier, DM4, p. 1; Groupe de citoyens spécialistes de l’eau vive, DM9, p. 2; Conseil régional de l’environnement de la Côte-Nord, DM8, p. 7; Mr. Ilya Klvana and Ms. Amélie Robillard, DM11, p. 3; Mr. Claude Lussier, DT1, p. 36). Others focused on specific aspects, asking that local specialists, such as biologists and environmental protection technicians, rather than outside resources, be made responsible for biodiversity monitoring (Mr. Claude Lussier, DT1, p. 33), or highlighted the need for a communications strategy, such as signs to indicate the boundary of the protected area in the Magpie river drainage basin to ensure that water sports enthusiasts are aware they are in a biodiversity reserve (Ms. Sylvie Angel, DT1, p. 67 and 68). The Ministère, in turn, reiterated its willingness to work with users of the territory for trail layout and surveillance (Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT2, p. 47; Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT2, p. 61, 100 and 105). Lastly, the Parks Canada Agency—Mingan Field Unit offered “[translation] to contribute to the management of the protected area, in particular by exchanging information and expertise” (DM24, p. 1).

The question of funding for the network of protected areas, including maintenance and surveillance, is not resolved. According to the spokesperson for the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs, “[translation] we will have to [...] highlight the budgetary and organizational impacts to manage the network of protected areas effectively. But, for now, we are still looking at various management and funding scenarios” (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 36).

One possible approach is the “[translation] green fund set up following the adoption of the *Sustainable Development Act* in December last year, [although] the mechanism of the dedicated fund [...] for protected areas is not yet known” (*ibid.*, p. 65). Another approach would involve charging for entry or for certain activities within the reserve,

without endangering the biodiversity protection objectives (*ibid.*, p. 68). One participant echoed the concerns raised in local communities by all these unknown factors: “[translation] we have this fancy project for a protected area, we don’t know where it’s going, we don’t know how it’s going to work, we don’t know who’s going to monitor it, we don’t know if there are going to be any grants attached” (Mr. Claude Lussier, DT1, p. 79).

- ◆ *The Commission observes that, beyond the principle that local authorities should participate, the mechanisms for the management and funding of protected areas and the network they form have not been resolved. As a result, at the public hearing, neither the public nor the Commission could envisage how local communities would be able to help implement the four biodiversity reserves in the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province.*
- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission considers that the Québec government should demonstrate its commitment to the network of protected areas by making the effort and allocating the resources needed to achieve the minimum objective of 8%, and by ruling swiftly on the funding and management mechanisms for each protected area.*

Chapter 2 **Expectations in the region**

In this chapter, the Commission summarizes the expectations of the Native and non-Native communities with respect to land use in the areas set aside for the four proposed biodiversity reserves. After verifying whether the projects meet general land use guidelines, the Commission examines the consequences of the protection measures set out in the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* on natural resource use and economic development.

Compliance with land use guidelines

During the public hearing, the Minganie RCM stated that the proposed biodiversity reserves located wholly or partly in its territory did not completely comply with its land use planning and development plan (DM2, p. 2). Biodiversity protection matches the objective of “[translation] protecting natural resources to avoid the extinction of species”, but the restrictions imposed by the protection status would not allow the RCM to promote the optimum use of the land under the guideline “[translation] Support the rational use of the natural resources in the environment” (DB5cd, p. 16). On the other hand, the RCM noted that the construction of access roads to the biodiversity reserves would allow the land to be developed “[translation] in compliance with all the objectives of the RCM’s land use planning and development plan” (DM2, p. 3).

The Basse-Côte-Nord “territoire équivalent” and the land in the municipality of Blanc-Sablon, where the southern portion of the biodiversity reserve on the Collines de Brador would be located, are not governed by a land use planning and development plan. The area is managed by a council of mayors from the municipalities of Blanc-Sablon, Bonne-Espérance, Côte-Nord-du-Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent, Gros-Mécatina and Saint-Augustin. A process is under way to form an RCM, which would eventually adopt its own land use planning and development plan (Mr. Armand Joncas, DT6, p. 68; Conseil des maires de la Basse-Côte-Nord, DM20, p. 2). The municipality of Blanc-Sablon is currently preparing a land use plan, which however will not be available before the work of the Commission comes to an end (Mr. Armand Joncas, DT6, p. 70). There are therefore no municipal land planning guidelines for the area forming the southern portion of the biodiversity reserve for the Collines de Brador.

Natural resources

Development on the Basse-Côte-Nord has been mainly based on natural resource extraction. As a result, the prohibition of natural resource exploration, development and extraction activities on areas of public land is seen locally as a potential loss of economic opportunities.

Forestry

Most of the land used for forestry is located in the southwest portion of the Basse-Côte-Nord, where there is a slight potential for development despite the low volume of marketable timber per hectare and the problem of access to remote forest stands.

According to the overview tabled by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, no rights have been granted for forestry activities within the four proposed biodiversity reserves. Cutting rights had been granted to supply a mill with a capacity of 2 000 m³ or less in two sectors within the proposed biodiversity reserve in the foothills of Lac Guernesé, but the permit expired on March 31, 2006 (DB1, p. 2; DQ2.1, p. 4). In fact, the four projects are located outside the reference area of public land where forest resources may be developed, regardless of whether or not the land is a protected area. As a result, the prohibition of forestry activities in the four proposed biodiversity reserves would not affect any industrial forest operator or mill owner (DB1, p. 3). In the area around the four projects, a single sector, located to the southeast of the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, has been used for forestry (Figure 1).

- ◆ *The Commission observes that the prohibition of forestry activities in the areas covered by the four proposed biodiversity reserves in the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province would not reduce the allowable annual cut in the region.*

Mineral potential

Staking, map designation of claims and mineral exploration and development activities have been prohibited in the area covered by the four projects under examination. To date, no mining rights have been granted within, or even around, the four projects, except in the sector to the west of Lac Magpie, just outside the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie. According to the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, the sector has high mineral potential: “[translation] it contains several traces of iron, copper, gold, silver and rare earths. The mineral potential is also reflected in the existence of several

hundred mining titles in the sector” (DQ2.1, p. 1). This mineral potential dictated the location of the boundary of the proposed reserve to the west of Lac Magpie, where it follows the valley bottom rather than the crest of the neighbouring hills, which would be a more natural limit in ecological terms.

The work carried out by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune and by the mining industry in the areas covered by the four projects has not led to any significant discoveries, although uranium anomalies have been detected around the Collines de Brador. The base rock in the region is not conducive to the discovery of fossil fuels (DB2, p. 5). As a result, although little mineral exploration activity is taking place and although factual knowledge about the local geology is limited, the Ministère has concluded that the mining potential of the areas under examination is generally low:

[Translation] [...] it is not possible to totally exclude the possibility of a future discovery of mineral deposits in a given area, which could eventually become an extractable resource. Be that as it may, based on the information available, the mineral potential in these two sectors appears to be fairly low [except in the sector to the west of Lac Magpie] where the potential appears average. For this reason, these areas appear to us to be suitable for designation as protected areas within the natural province.

(DQ6.1, p. 1 and 2)

- ◆ *The Commission observes that the small amount of work carried out to date by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune and by the mining industry in the area covered by the four proposed biodiversity reserves in the Basse-Côte-Nord Plateau natural province has not led to the discovery of any significant mineralized showing.*

Hydroelectric potential

One of the objectives of the *Québec Energy Strategy 2006-2015* is to resume and accelerate the pace of hydroelectric development. The Government has targeted the completion of 4 500 MW in major new development by 2010, with two projects totalling 3 000 MW on the Basse-Côte-Nord, on the Rivière Romaine and the Rivière du Petit Mécatina. To achieve this objective, “[translation] Hydro-Québec has been instructed to identify several projects and carry out feasibility studies [...] to build up a potential portfolio of 1 500 MW” (Mr. Sébastien Desrochers, DT1, p. 20).

Protection status prohibits all hydroelectric and wind energy development within a proposed or permanent biodiversity reserve. In addition, any project adjacent to a reserve must be designed so as to have no impact, including fluctuations in water level, within a protected area (*id.*, DT1, p. 29 and DT2, p. 24). Before a proposed

biodiversity reserve is designated, an inter-departmental consultation must take place to assess the potential of the land involved. For the four projects under examination, the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune has agreed that the rivers crossing the four proposed biodiversity reserves will not be developed, but reserves the right to harness their potential downstream from the protected areas (*id.*, DT2, p. 24).

No intentions have been expressed for three of the projects, but for the fourth, the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, the situation is different. In 2005, Hydro-Québec confirmed its short and medium term interest in the hydroelectric potential of the stretch of the Rivière Magpie downstream from the protected area, assessed at around 600 MW (DQ3.1, p. 1; Mr. Sébastien Desrochers, DT1, p. 20). The mini power station under development by the Société en commandite Magpie at Magpie dam would have an installed capacity of roughly 40 MW. There is therefore a potential for energy development upstream from the dam on the Rivière Magpie as far as the southern boundary of the proposed biodiversity reserve.

The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs and the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune have stated that the current southern boundary of the proposed biodiversity reserve results from negotiations between the two departments. While the environment department appears to be open to an extension of the protection zone further downstream, the natural resources department is waiting for the results of an assessment of the hydroelectric potential of Québec's rivers, including Rivière Magpie, currently underway at Hydro-Québec (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne and Mr. Sébastien Desrochers, DT1, p. 18 and 19).

- ◆ *The Commission observes that the stretch of the Rivière Magpie to the south of the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie has potential for hydroelectric generation that Hydro-Québec wishes to reserve over the short and medium term.*

Recreation and tourism potential in the Rivière Magpie drainage basin

Many participants in the hearing stressed that the emergence of a new economic sector based on tourism and ecotourism is inevitable, and considered that new businesses in the sector would enhance economic development in the immediate region by attracting visitors to the Minganie region (Groupe de citoyens spécialistes de l'eau vive, DM9, p. 2; Mr. Alain Carpentier, DM4, p. 3). According to the Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation, the percentage of

primary-sector jobs on the Côte-Nord is almost four times higher than in the rest of Québec¹. The tourism sector has potential for the diversification of the regional economy by stimulating tertiary-sector employment. In addition, at the public hearing, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs pointed out that development in the recreation and tourism sector was not totally impossible in a biodiversity reserve, provided it matched the objectives of the conservation plan (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 69; Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT1, p. 71).

A national park

The Minganie RCM would prefer the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie to be given status as a national park rather than a biodiversity reserve (DM2, p. 3 and 5; Ms. Stéphanie Élias, DT5, p. 30). In its opinion, there is no justification for the creation of a new protected area unless there is some associated leisure and tourist development (DM2, p. 3 and 5). One member of the general public pointed out that the social acceptability of protected areas in Minganie is at issue here. “[Translation] If we create protected areas today that do not have much economic development potential, it will be much harder to propose new ones in the same region in the future” (Mr. Yann Troutet, DM16, p. 2).

The RCM bases its proposal in part on studies carried out for Parks Canada concerning the creation of a second federal national park in the region (DC1d). Although a provincial national park has been proposed to the east of the Rivière Grande Natashquan, the RCM still prefers the Magpie river basin (DM2, p. 4). It believes the resources set aside by the Québec government for the Natashquan project should be assigned instead to the Magpie project (Ms. Stéphanie Élias, DT5, p. 34). To improve access to the area, the RCM wants a road link to be built from route 138 to the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie. One of the participants at the hearing supported this approach, saying that “[translation] to protect something, you first have to understand it, and to understand, you need to see it” (Ms. Sylvie Angel, DT1, p. 71).

However, participants were by no means unanimous in their support of the proposed national park. Some were concerned about the ensuing restrictions on outdoor activities (Comité des citoyens de Magpie, DM6, p. 3; Mr. Ilya Klvana and Ms. Amélie Robillard, DM11, p. 3). The Innu Council of Ekuanishit also had reservations about land access:

1. <www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca/page/web/portail/developpementRegional/nav/regions/42239/60933/60944.html?iddoc=60944> (January 22, 2007).

[Translation] It's something we continue to think about in the community [...] there has been a lot of talk about plans to open up the area. [...] As far as we're concerned, we've been stating our concerns since 1975, ever since negotiations began, and development has continued in spite of constraints at our level that have affected the area. At the present time, if the area is opened up, then the same concerns will come up again. Let me say this clearly: we're not against development, but it's the way development has often taken place, usually without us.

(Mr. Jean-Charles Piétacho, DT5, p. 70 and 71)

The southern stretch of Rivière Magpie

Hydro-Québec's interest in the southern stretch of Rivière Magpie worried many participants, who pointed out that the BAPE Commission responsible for investigating the Magpie dam hydroelectricity generating project concluded:

[Translation] Hydroelectric development on the river should be limited to the proposed generating station at the Magpie dam. The entire upper stretch of the Rivière Magpie should remain intact to preserve the natural attractions of a sector that is extremely popular among outdoor enthusiasts. To protect the Rivière Magpie in the longer term, and to promote sustainable development, it would be wise to protect the entire course of this magnificent river between the third waterfall and rapids, and Lac Magpie.

(Report 198, p. 47)

They were opposed to any new development of Rivière Magpie, proposing instead to maintain the white water activities and increase their regional economic spin-offs (Mr. Alain Carpentier, DM4, p. 2 and 3; Comité des citoyens de Magpie, DM6, p. 3; Association de développement et de protection de l'environnement de la rivière Magpie, DM7, p. 2; Conseil régional de l'environnement de la Côte-Nord, DM8, p. 4; Société pour la nature et les parcs du Canada, DM10, p. 8 to 10; Odyssée Minganie, DM12, p. 2 and 3; Nature Québec/UQCN, DM13, p. 2; Mr. Yan Troutet, DM16, p. 3; Fondation Rivières, DM23, p. 9 to 12).

The Association québécoise de la production d'énergie renouvelable, for its part, believes the construction of two new hydroelectric generating stations along the waterway would not reduce the length of the current rafting, canoe and kayak route. "[Translation] These potential projects would give Hydro-Québec access to an additional capacity of at least 40 to 70 MW" (DM19, p. 7).

Some participants pointed out that what makes the river exceptional is its unspoilt wilderness aspect and waterfalls. Fondation Rivières pointed out that the Rivière Magpie was ranked among the top ten rivers in the world for white water activities by *National Geographic Traveler* magazine (DM23, p. 11). According to Odyssée

Minganie, the river is unequalled for long-distance rafting, canoe and kayak expeditions, thanks to its abundance of rapids and its wilderness aspect (DM12, p. 2). Another participant thought Québec should concentrate on its international tourist potential, of which the falls are the key elements:

[...][Translation] The falls, it's the emotion they generate at the end of the river, it's like a kind of summit, if you like, at the top of a mountain. We arrived, and there we were, next to the falls, bathed in water vapour. You can't take away that kind of feeling. If you do, I'm convinced it's tantamount to shutting down the Rivière Magpie to international visitors.
(Mr. Mathieu Bourdon, DT5, p. 85)

Nature Québec/UQCN also felt the river had tremendous potential for leisure and tourist development and economic spin-offs, which Fondation Rivières estimated at some \$3 million, with 5,000 visitors per year (DM13, p. 2; DC5d, p. 7).

- ◆ *The Commission notes that any new hydroelectricity projects on Rivière Magpie would alter the wilderness aspect that has allowed it to gain an international reputation for white water activities.*

After an exhaustive analysis, the BAPE Commission that examined the proposed hydroelectricity development at the Magpie dam proposed a number of avenues for sustainable development in its August 2004 report. It gave the following opinion: “[Translation] [...] it is important for the third waterfall on Rivière Magpie (from the Gulf of St. Lawrence coast) and its rapids to be protected in their entirety” (Report 198, p. 47). At the present hearings, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs stated that it had intended to follow the BAPE's recommendation, but Hydro-Québec had objected to the proposed southerly extension of the biodiversity reserve (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 18; DQ 3.1, p.1).

This Commission shares the vision of sustainable development for Rivière Magpie. Accordingly, all future development must be respectful of current usage and the river's unique natural character. Most of the participants at both the BAPE's public hearings clearly showed that any new hydroelectric development upstream of the dam currently being built would be incompatible with this vision. The Commission shares their conclusion.

- ◆ **Opinion** — *In view of the specific nature of Rivière Magpie, the Commission believes it should be exempt from any new hydroelectricity development projects and should be given protected status, in order to preserve its natural character and its recreation and tourism potential.*

Permanent prohibition of industrial activities

Representatives of municipalities and economic development agencies were unanimous in supporting the principle of protecting 8% of the total area of Québec. However, they first asked for full data on the operational potential of the natural resources in the area under study, so as to assess the impacts of permanent protection (Conseil régional des élus de la Côte-Nord, DM14, p. 15; Centre local de développement de la Basse-Côte-Nord, DM5, p. 2; Conseil des maires de la Basse-Côte-Nord, DM20, p. 2; Mayor of Blanc-Sablon, DM15; Mayor of the Municipality of Saint-Augustin, DM1, p. 2; Mayor of the Municipality of Bonne-Espérance, DM25).

The Conférence régionale des élus de la Côte-Nord pointed out that the protected areas encroached on sectors where economic projects could eventually be developed to help with the recovery of a region that has suffered significant population declines in recent years, as well as high unemployment rates (DM14, p. 13). The Mayor of the Municipality of Saint-Augustin observed that the Basse-Côte-Nord communities had become extremely fragile, economically speaking, since the moratorium on maritime fishing. He felt the protection measures would prevent the local economy from diversifying, leading to a population exodus and cultural impoverishment (DM1, p. 2). A citizen from Saint-Augustin also asked for greater effort to ensure the survival of local communities before investing in land protection (Mr. Nicholas Shattler, DT5, p. 62).

At the other end of the spectrum, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society pointed out that “[translation] conservation of biodiversity, ecological processes and landscapes should continue to be the primary objective. It is absolutely essential to avoid diluting the protected area concept through a series of regional accommodations designed to attain social acceptability” (DM10, p. 5).

It goes without saying that the final decision concerning the protected area boundaries should be based on an analysis of both conservation and economic considerations. Long debates have already taken place on all the projects between the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs and the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, at sittings of a technical committee on protected areas. Among other things, the two government departments have said this:

The Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune must establish the level of use of the resources concerned, and the impacts of the potential creation of biodiversity reserves on their development and enhancement. The information and comments are submitted to the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs and discussed at sittings of the technical committee on protected areas. (DQ1.2, p. 4 and 5)

However, the local population, which was not involved in these discussions, feels it has not been properly informed of the resource extraction potential in the areas under study. The Commission points out that, in 2003, at a public hearing on the Monts Groulx and Île René-Levasseur protected areas, participants emphasized the importance of working together for the creation of protected areas on the Côte-Nord:

[Translation] The Commission does not intend to judge the process undertaken by the Ministère de l'Environnement with regard to the early protected areas. However, it feels that, in the Côte-Nord area, it would be wise to incorporate a consensus-seeking stage for actual or potential projects submitted by the coordinating government department or the civil society.
(Report 181, p. 25)

The Commission believes a decision on protected area projects requires a reconciliation of the various land and resource users that goes beyond individual interests to consider the common interest of all Quebecers.

- ◆ *The Commission notes that the inter-ministerial consultation preceding the setting aside of land for the four projects currently under consideration was able to reconcile conservation interests and the potential economic losses resulting from a ban on industrial activity. However, the absence of upstream consultations with local communities meant that the population was unable to accept the underlying value of the decision to set these areas aside.*

Land occupation

The proposed conservation plans for the four biodiversity reserves would maintain existing rights. Non-industrial activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping and traditional Native activities are authorized provided they do not have a significant impact on biodiversity. Most participants at the public hearings wanted to clarify these proposals, in particular with regard to land rights and rights of way.

Land rights

Land rights acquired prior to the date on which the conservation plan comes into force, along with the activities carried out on the land in question, would be maintained. No new occupation rights for vacation purposes would be granted, unless the biodiversity reserve conservation plan provided otherwise, and established the applicable conditions (PR3ab, p. 41).

When the proposed biodiversity reserves for the Collines de Brador and the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles were created, no land rights had been granted within their boundaries. Eight land rights had, however, been granted in the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie – two leases for personal vacation purposes, four rough shelter leases and two commercial leases (see Figure 1). In the proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé, only one commercial lease (for an exclusive right outfitting operation) had been granted to the Club de pêche au saumon de la rivière Saint-Paul. Two other areas suitable for the development of exclusive right outfitters have been identified, along the Coxipi and Napetipi rivers (see Figure 2).

During a reconnaissance trip to the area, the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune inventoried roughly 30 rough shelters or unregistered cottages in the proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé (Mr. Sébastien Desrochers, DT2, p. 76). Most are located south-east of Rivière Bujeault (Mr. René Lette, DT2, p. 63). In addition, a survival shelter also appears to exist in the sector. This area is particularly meaningful to the people of Blanc-Sablon: “All we have here, we don’t have no roads [...] We’re not allowed to go on the water. And you’re trying to [...] somewhat restrict slowly our access to the land” (Mr. Roger Jones, DT2, p. 118). Another participant said the land represents “[translation] a way of relaxing during vacations and showing our children another lifestyle [...] The area you want to take is the only forest area we have” (Ms. Judith Roger, DM3, p. 1). The Mayor of Blanc-Sablon pointed out that the region’s inhabitants had always used the land, and had always been careful to respect and protect it (Mr. Armand Joncas, DM15).

According to the *Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State* (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1), no person may erect or maintain a building, installations or works on any land except with authorization of the Minister having authority over that land (section 54). For illegal occupation, the usual procedure is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife to ask the offender to vacate and restore the site.

Most participants at the Blanc-Sablon hearings were worried about this situation; they were afraid they would lose the buildings they had constructed. According to the spokesperson of the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, people who wish to legalize an unregistered occupation must make a formal application, which will be examined in accordance with current regulations. For applications that are not accepted, the Department mentioned the possibility of alternative solutions. “[translation] Perhaps there are other sectors or a way of normalizing the situation that would allow the person to have a cottage” (Mr. Sébastien Desrochers, DT6, p. 26). The Department’s spokesperson also said the Native communities would have to be consulted on the location of leases, so as to “[translation] accommodate them in

cases where the right is inconsistent with traditional activities” (*id.*, DT4, p. 31). Lastly, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs said it was prepared to include a provision in the final conservation plan, authorizing a right of occupation for existing buildings in the proposed biodiversity for the foothills of Lac Guernesé (Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT6, p. 35).

- ◆ *The Commission notes that the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune and the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs, in accordance with current regulations, are willing to normalize unregistered occupations in the biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé, most of which are located in a sector south-east of Rivière Bujeault.*
- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes the process of normalizing unregistered occupations in the proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé should be organized as quickly as possible, in collaboration with the people concerned.*

Rights of way

Outside the winter season, overland access to the four proposed biodiversity reserves is limited by the absence of roads. Several participants from Blanc-Sablon noted the existence of many different trails giving access to fishing grounds, hunting grounds and camps in the area of the proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé (Mr. Philippe Labadie, DT2, p. 59; Mr. Dawson Osbourne, DT2, p. 97 and 98). The trails have not been inventoried or authorized by either the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune or the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs.

In the conservation plans for the four projects under consideration, only two rights of way have been granted, both within the boundaries of the proposed biodiversity reserve for the Collines de Brador. Any new trails must be authorized by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs as stipulated in the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT2, p. 47).

Participants were critical of having to make official applications for existing trails on non-permanent rights of way:

So, if somebody goes that way and it is not very good after ten or twenty people passed there, he’s going to go ten feet that way. The next one after twenty-five, thirty times passing there, he’s going to go there, and the same thing on the other side [...] If you want to protect the little flower there, you have to make some place that we can pass there. Otherwise, we’re going to pass there, and next fellow is going to pass there, and all around the mountain.

(Mr. Michel Beaudoin, DT2, p. 108)

Of the four proposed biodiversity reserves, only the Collines de Brador are located near a village, and hence are easily accessible. To preserve the area's biodiversity, some participants were open to the possibility of not travelling through it, provided a permanent trail could be built to give access to the foothills of Lac Guernesé (Mr. Michel Beaudoin, DT2, p. 108; Mr. Armand Joncas, DM15). The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs said it was in favour of the construction of such a trail, in collaboration with the local population (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT2, p. 111 and 112).

- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes plans should be drawn up by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs, in collaboration with users, for trails in the proposed biodiversity reserves, in order to reconcile preservation of biological diversity and land access issues.*

The expectations of the Innu communities

The Innu communities of Ekuanitshit and Pakua Shipu played an active role in the Commission's work, thereby fulfilling the Government's desire to set up a dialogue with the First Nations. The Innu Council of Ekuanitshit and the Innu Council of Pakua Shipu nevertheless said their participation did not mean they were adopting a position regarding the Government's biodiversity reserve proposals. The Innu Council of Ekuanitshit, in its own name and on behalf of the Innu Council of Pakua Shipu, both members of the Mamu Pakatatau Mamit Assembly, pointed out that:

[Translation] All discussions between the community and the provincial government concerning the proposed biodiversity reserves will be subject to the land negotiations that are currently underway;

With regard to the biodiversity reserves as they are currently proposed, the Innu community of Ekuanitshit is not subject to any new regulations that would conflict with its traditional activities and ancestral rights;

The Innu community of Ekuanitshit reserves the right to review any regulatory applications that would be contrary to its future economic development.

(DM18, p. 1)

The Innu Council of Pakua Shipu also expressed its profound disappointment concerning the Government's decision, which it considers to be unilateral. "[Translation] It is deeply regrettable, once again, that the Innu of Pakuashipi were consulted only downstream of the decisions, rather than upstream" (DM22, p. 6). Representatives of both communities expressed their concerns about the continuation

of traditional activities in the area. For example, the Ekuanitshit community pointed out that modern hunting always required hunters to follow wildlife movements. As a result, they need to build camps, and such sites vary according to the direction taken by the animal populations. Every family builds a main camp (DM18, p. 3 and 4). The Innu Council of Pakua Shipu described traditional activities as follows:

[Translation] The concept of traditional activities among the Pakuashipi Innu is a product of their own particular culture, connections and relationships that they maintain with Nitassinan. It is a general concept that varies according to the season and has been adjusted over the years. It may include fishing, hunting, fruit gathering, travel and camping on Nitassinan, respect for burial grounds and sites on Nitassinan with connections to myths and legends, specific place names and frequent travel, depending on life's events and inter-community relations. (DM22, p. 8)

The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs has stated that the practice of traditional activities will not be affected

[Translation] It is certainly not part of the philosophy of the biodiversity reserves to be contrary to the practice of traditional Native activities, in the sense that those activities will continue. (Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT7, p. 20)

As far as the gathering of medicinal plants is concerned, the Department's representative agreed that, to avoid misunderstandings with the Pakua Shipu community, knowledge should be shared and information processing should be properly structured. However, the current state of the resource needs to be assessed, in collaboration with the community, and sectors that it may be desirable to protect should be identified. Some of this information will be included in the conservation plan (Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT7, p. 19 and 21).

The representatives of both Innu communities also reasserted their right to carry out economic and tourist development activities in the areas that will be converted into biodiversity reserves (Innu Council of Ekuanitshit, DM18, p. 5; Ms. Mary Mark, DT7, p. 28). The Department is open to a certain form of development, but any proposals must be examined to ensure that the goal of protecting biodiversity is met. Accordingly, all industrial projects will be prohibited (Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT7, p. 29). In addition, in response to a question raised by a member of the Pakua Shipu community, the Department said it was open to new proposals for the creation of protected areas (Mr. Serge Mestokosho and Mr. Olivier Bérard, DT7, p. 31).

The Innu Council of Ekuanitshit is not, at first glance, opposed to the creation of biodiversity reserves in the area currently under negotiation. It points out, however,

that depending on the outcome of negotiations currently underway at other levels, there may no longer be a need for them, or their management may become the responsibility of the Innus, alone or jointly (DM18, p. 5 and 6). The Innu Council of Pakua Shipu, for its part, did not express an opinion on the proposed biodiversity reserves but did point out that any project proposed for the area must take the existing land claims into account (DM22, p. 8).

- ◆ *The Commission notes that the Innu communities of Ekuanitshit and Pakua Shipu have criticized the fact that lands have been set aside by the Québec government for the creation of biodiversity reserves in the Basse-Côte-Nord region.*
- ◆ *The Commission notes that the Innu communities of Ekuanitshit and Pakua Shipu support the concept of protecting the land. In addition, the four proposed biodiversity reserves would not hinder the practice of the communities' traditional activities, nor would they be an obstacle to development that is respectful of biodiversity.*

Conditions for the granting of permanent protected status

Projects on the border with Labrador

Of the four projects under consideration, three lie along the provisional southern border of Labrador. On the north side of the proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé, where the boundary runs in a straight line, the protected area boundary does not correspond to biophysical criteria (see Figure 2). One of the participants at the public hearings pointed out that there is some legal uncertainty surrounding the management of the transborder zone, and that the actions of the neighbouring province's authorities could well ruin conservation efforts on the Québec side of the border:

We got a 1927 imaginary line that makes a border [...] in order to define where Quebec finishes to and where the Labrador starts to [...] We are going to make a nice park on this side which is in a gray zone that nobody knows who owns it. The Newfies are going to come in and they are going to do mining exploration. They are going to do hydro exploration. They are going to do everything.
(Mr. Armand Joncas, DT2, p. 22)

In response to this, the spokespeople from the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune and the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs pointed out that they are obliged to comply with the current boundary and any subsequent alterations, and that the Government of Newfoundland-and-Labrador

could not currently authorize hydroelectricity projects in the disputed region (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne and Mr. Sébastien Desrochers, DT2, p. 27 and 28).

For several years now, an association from Newfoundland and Labrador, known as the *Protected Areas Association of Newfoundland and Labrador*, has proposed the creation of a 16 500 km² protected area to be known as the *Lac Joseph Wilderness Reserve*, adjacent to the proposed biodiversity reserves for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie and the knolls of Lac des Sauterelles¹. If the project were to come to fruition, it would help to create an enormous protected area straddling the watershed between Québec and Labrador. The representatives from the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs said the Québec and Newfoundland and Labrador governments were already collaborating on plans to create a protected area in the Torngat Mountains region northeast of Québec (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 46). The Commission believes the same type of collaboration should exist for the southern border of Labrador.

- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs should work with the government of Newfoundland and Labrador to set aside land in the Basse-Côte-Nord region so that the boundaries of any protected areas located on the border with Labrador are consistent with natural units and receive effective protection.*

The proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie

A new configuration

This particular biodiversity reserve, covering part of the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, was almost unanimously supported and the concept underlying the biodiversity reserve pleased numerous participants (Comité des citoyens de Magpie, DM6, p. 3; Groupe de citoyens spécialistes de l'eau vive, DM9, p. 1). Biodiversity reserve status is consistent with the sustainable development vision they want for the river “[translation] because it preserves the river’s integrity, allows for free access and authorizes the development of infrastructures that are respectful of the environment” (Association de développement et de protection de l’environnement de la rivière Magpie, DM7, p. 2).

However, participants from the economic, municipal and environmental communities made four proposals for altering the boundaries of the proposed biodiversity reserve.

1. <www.paanl.org/lac-joseph.htm> (January 22, 2007).

Their first proposal includes the river's entire drainage basin (Nature Québec/UQCN, DM13, p. 4; Mr. Ilya Klvana and Ms. Amélie Robillard, DM11, p. 1). According to Nature Québec/UQCN, the best way of preserving the ecological integrity of a river is to protect the drainage basin in its entirety. The organization also believes that "[translation] Magpie is a good area for this approach, in that mining and forestry constraints are fairly minimal in the drainage basin" (DM13.1, p. 3). The second proposal involves simply doubling the area of the proposed biodiversity reserve by including part of the Rivière Magpie drainage basin, excluding its north-western portion, and the southern stretch of the river (Minganie RCM, DM2, p. 3 and Appendix 2). The third proposal would include the western shore of Lac Magpie, in order to incorporate the entire lake valley in the protected area (Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, DM10, p. 7). This proposed enlargement would have the advantage of protecting the landscape that is visible from the valley floor while limiting access to the land in the event that forestry activities are authorized in the future (Mr. Jean-Guy Labrie, DT1, p. 23 and 24).

The fourth and last proposal would extend the biodiversity reserve southwards, as far as the third waterfall, to preserve this portion of the river from all future hydroelectric development (Conseil régional de l'environnement de la Côte-Nord, DM8, p. 4; Mr. Alain Carpentier, DM4, p. 2 and 3; Association de développement et de protection de l'environnement de la rivière Magpie, DM7, p. 1; Comité des citoyens de Magpie, DM6, p. 3; Mr. Yann Troutet, DM16, p. 3; Groupe de citoyens spécialistes de l'eau vive, DM9, p. 3; Odysée Minganie, DM12, p. 1). According to two participants, if this option is not selected, the proposed biodiversity reserve would not be of much use since it would not protect the most interesting portion of the river (Mr. Ilya Klvana and Ms. Amélie Robillard, DM11, p. 2).

The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs has said it is open to the possibility of incorporating the southern shore of Lac Magpie into the biodiversity reserve, as long as there are no mining titles. This would, however, be conditional on the production of an ecological analysis and a socio-economic impact assessment (DA7d).

- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie, which was supported by most participants, should be granted permanent protection status as swiftly as possible. However, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs should revise the boundary on the western shore of Lac Magpie in order to protect the valley up to the ridge line, thus ensuring landscape and ecological integrity.*

Energy transmission line

Hydro-Québec is presently studying a corridor approximately 200 km long and 5 km wide for construction of a transmission line between the existing Montagnais station and the future Romaine-3 and Romaine-4 stations from the La Romaine hydroelectricity project. The final line would be approximately 100 m wide and would cut across the entire proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie from east to west (see Figure 1). The corridor would avoid the main steep rocky areas, the frost and wind amplification zones, and the golden eagle nesting sites along the encased valley (DB2, p. 5; DD1).

Because all constructions for the production or transmission of energy are considered to be industrial activity, the spokesperson for the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs felt it would be necessary to review the boundaries of the protected area if the La Romaine hydroelectricity project was approved by the Government (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT1, p. 31). If this were to happen, the area of the energy transmission line footprint, along with the roads required outside the line footprint to avoid obstacles, would have to be excluded from the biodiversity reserve (DQ3.1, p. 2).

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society observed that construction of an energy transmission line through the protected area would lead to fragmentation. It recommended that a transmission line management protocol be agreed upon by Hydro-Québec and the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs so as to ensure that work is not contrary to conservation goals (DM10, p. 11). Nature Québec/UQCN agreed on the need for a corridor that would allow for a link between future La Romaine hydroelectricity generating stations and the Hydro-Québec energy transmission network, but proposed that the impacts of fragmentation be compensated by enlarging the protected area (DM13, p. 3). Another participant proposed that the compensatory enlargement should run as far as the extension of the existing forest road between Rivière-Saint-Jean and Lac Magpie, so that the area can be accessed by all Quebecers (Mr. Charles Kavanagh, DT1, p. 59). A member of the Innu community of Ekuanitshit did not want the area to become more accessible, and did not want an energy transmission line to run across her family land, since the cultural life of the Innu is closely tied in with the land (Ms. Sylvie Basile, DT5, p. 43).

The Commission notes that the energy transmission line running from the La Romaine hydroelectricity project will be subject to an environmental impact assessment. It believes the assessment should include consideration of the repercussions that would arise from reviewing the boundaries of the protected area to ensure that the transmission line footprint has the least possible impact. Accordingly,

the Commission believes the boundaries of the biodiversity reserve should not be revised with a view to excluding the transmission line footprint until the impact assessment procedure for the La Romaine hydroelectric project has been completed.

- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes the boundaries of the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie should be revised after the environmental impact assessment for the La Romaine hydroelectric project and its energy transmission line has identified the route with the least impact on the reserve and has established the appropriate mitigation and compensation measures.*

The proposed biodiversity reserve for the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles

This proposed biodiversity reserve, in a rarely visited area that is difficult to access, was approved by the participants who spoke about it (Minganie RCM, DM2, p. 4; Ms. Sylvie Basile and Mr. David Basile, DT5, p. 39).

Members of the Ekuanitshit Innu community, whose family land lies partly in the proposed protected area, appreciated the ban on heavy industrial activities but did not want their traditional activities to be limited (Ms. Sylvie Basile and Mr. David Basile, DT5, p. 39). Among other things, they noted the presence of a herd of woodland caribou and a pack of wolves in the area under consideration. A second pack of wolves appears to live on the participants' family land. It was thought that by keeping the area intact, it may be possible to save the two packs (Mr. David Basile, DT5, p. 40). The woodland caribou is designated as a vulnerable species in Québec. So far, the wolf is not on the list of threatened or vulnerable species nor on the list of species likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable. The Innu are worried that easier access to the area would alter the animals' behaviour, possibly causing them to desert the sector (*ibid.*, p. 44).

To complete the conservation plan data, a transfer of Native knowledge was proposed, with all the attention and precautions that a collaborative initiative such as this would require (Ms. Sylvie Basile, DT5, p. 46). The Chief of the Ekuanitshit community reiterated the importance of this knowledge for the Innu, since it forms an integral part of their heritage (Mr. Jean-Charles Piétacho, DT5, p. 72 and 73).

- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes the Québec government should immediately grant permanent protection status to the proposed biodiversity reserve for the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles.*

The proposed biodiversity reserves for the Collines de Brador and the foothills of Lac Guernesé

The Minganie RCM believes an opinion on the acceptability of the proposed biodiversity reserve for the Collines de Brador should come from the local population and the managers of the Basse-Côte-Nord “territoire équivalent” (DM2, p. 4). The project earned a moderately favourable reception from participants at the public hearing, although support varied according to the interests and geographical location of the participants. Some national groups were in favour of the project, while most of the local communities rejected it.

Their rejection was based on two arguments. First, the local communities would prefer natural resource extraction rather than land protection, and they also want to be able to continue their current vacation activities (Mr. Philippe Labadie, DT2, p. 61; Mr. Roger Jones, DT2, p. 118 and 120; Ms. Judith Roger, DM3, p. 1). The Minganie RCM, for its part, found it difficult to adopt a position on this particular biodiversity reserve due to a lack of information on the sector’s resources and landscapes (DM2, p. 4).

The Mayors of Blanc-Sablon, Rivière-Saint-Paul and Saint-Augustin, and one economic development agency, proposed that both biodiversity reserves should be suspended for a few years so that the economic potential of the area’s resources can be assessed (Mr. Armand Joncas, DM15; Mr. Camille Fequet, DM1, p. 1; Conseil des maires de la Basse-Côte-Nord, DM20, p. 2; Mr. Lionel Roberts, DM25; CLD de la Basse-Côte-Nord, DM5, p. 2). If the inventory turns out not to be productive, the Mayor of Saint-Augustin would be in favour of setting the land aside: “If the territory has no potential, for example, mining, hydroelectric, be our guest, come in and protect the whole area. Open it all, even bigger than what it is as a reserve. We would not have a problem” (Mr. Camille Fequet, DT5, p. 27).

The Commission points out the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune has concluded that the area in question has very little potential for mining (DQ6.1, p. 1 and 2). The Commission believes it is the responsibility of the Department, as a full partner in the protected area program, to ensure that the communities in question are aware of its extraction potential assessment for the areas in question, and any residual economic impacts where applicable. This will give the population a better understanding of the reasons underlying the prohibition of industrial natural resource activities, thereby allowing them to support the decision to set the areas aside for protection.

- ◆ *The Commission notes that the proposed biodiversity reserve for the Collines de Brador received a mitigated welcome, while that for the foothills of Lac Guernesé was contested. Most of the communities would prefer to give priority to economic development and current land use.*
- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes that before the Québec government grants permanent status to the proposed biodiversity reserves for the Collines de Brador and for the foothills of Lac Guernesé, the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, in its capacity as a full partner in the protected area program, must be responsible for ensuring that the communities understand the reasons that led to the prohibition of industrial development of the natural resources in the areas in question.*

At the public hearing, one participant proposed the withdrawal of a sector located south-east of Rivière Bujeault from the proposed biodiversity reserve (Mr. Roger Jones, DT2, p. 117). The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs wishes to protect this sector because of its old-growth softwood forests, salmon rivers and glacier-formed landscapes. The Commission notes that this portion is the one that would generate the most difficulty for vacationers, since most of the area's unregistered cottages are located there. The Department's spokesperson said it would consider the proposal to withdraw this sector from the protected area (Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, DT2, p. 119).

- ◆ **Opinion** — *The Commission believes that before granting permanent protection status to the proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs should re-examine the need to protect the vacation sector located south-east of Rivière Bujeault.*

Conclusion

The Commission reiterates the importance of setting aside land in order to preserve viable and representative samples of Québec's biodiversity for posterity. It applauds the recent approach, with its emphasis on consultation and public participation in the selection of areas of interest. It is unfortunate that this approach was not used when selecting the four proposed biodiversity reserves discussed at these public hearings on the Basse-Côte-Nord. The fact that the areas and their boundaries were chosen unilaterally, combined with the private nature of upstream discussions between the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs and the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune concerning the economic potential of the areas in question, generated a great deal of opposition.

When an area, whatever or wherever it may be, is permanently set aside, it forces those concerned to examine their own perception of development, and the perception that society as a whole should adopt. If no effort is made to obtain the support of the local communities that will be most affected by the decision, the public consultation that should serve as a stepping stone from proposal to permanence, serves instead as a forum for initial debate rather than preparing regional participation in the protected areas network.

The sustained participation of the Innu communities of Ekuanitshit and Pakua Shipu at the public hearings clearly demonstrates their interest in the land they occupy. Although the proposed biodiversity reserve status would not prevent them from continuing to exercise their traditional activities, the communities nevertheless opposed a process that resulted in the selection of lands in respect of which their claims to ancestral rights are currently being negotiated with the Québec and Canadian governments.

The Commission observed some uncertainty concerning the creation of biodiversity reserves. For example, although participatory management will be a priority, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs is unable to provide specific information on the operation and eventual financing of the reserves. Only one biodiversity reserve has recently been granted permanent status. There is therefore no real model that the general public and local authorities can use as a basis for biodiversity reserve financing and participatory management. The Québec government must demonstrate its commitment to the network of protected areas by devoting the necessary effort and resources and by ruling swiftly on the financing and mechanisms required for their management.

The Commission believes the Québec government should permanently set aside the two biodiversity reserves for the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles and the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie. In this latter case, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs should reassess the boundary on the western shore of Lac Magpie in order to protect the valley up to the ridge line, so as to ensure the integrity of its landscapes and ecology. In addition, to allow for the construction of an electricity transmission line, the boundaries of this proposed biodiversity reserve should be revised after the environmental impact assessment process for the La Romaine hydroelectric project has identified the route with the least impact on the reserve, along with appropriate mitigation and compensation measures. At the same time, the stretch of Rivière Magpie located south of the proposed biodiversity reserve, due to its special nature, should be exempted from future hydroelectric development and should be granted protected status in order to preserve its wilderness aspect and recreation and tourism potential.

The proposed biodiversity reserve for the Collines de Brador received a mixed welcome, while that for the foothills of Lac Guernesé generated the most opposition. Many participants mentioned the loss of current land use and mining, forest and hydroelectric potential that might have helped institute an economic recovery in the region. Although the local authorities support the concept of biodiversity protection, they have asked for a moratorium to assess the natural resource potential of the areas affected by these two projects. Before the Québec government grants permanent protection status to the proposed biodiversity reserves for the Collines de Brador and for the foothills of Lac Guernesé, the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs should reassess the need to protect the vacation sector located south-east of Rivière Bujeault. In addition, the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, in its capacity as a full partner in the protected area program, should ensure that the communities understand the reasons underlying the prohibition of industrial natural resource harvesting activities in these areas. The population would then be in a position to accept the validity of the decision to set the areas aside for protection.

The goal of protecting 8% of all land in Québec is significantly behind schedule. If it is to be achieved, there will have to be much greater collaboration between the various administrative authorities and the population as a whole. The Québec government must demonstrate its commitment by reasserting its desire to achieve the goal. The concept of biodiversity reserves is fairly new. To create the reserves, a certain amount of learning and evolution will therefore be required. First and foremost, local communities must be convinced of the validity of the biodiversity reserves, if we want the regions of Québec to contribute by protecting a portion of what they consider to be “their” territory.

Made in city of Québec,

Pierre Béland
Chair of the Commission

The following were involved in writing the report:

Mr. David Boudreault, analyst

Ms. Sophie Hamel-Dufour, analyst

With assistance from:

Ms. Anne-Lyne Boutin, coordinator, commission secretariat

Ms. Louise Marois, secretary

Ms. Catherine Roberge, communications specialist

Appendix 1

**Information on the
mandates**

The Mandates

The mandates entrusted to the BAPE under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01) involved holding public consultations and reporting the results and an analysis of the results to the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks.

The mandates began on September 14, 2006 with a 30-day period during which the case file was made available to the public for information purposes.

The Commission and Team

The Commission

Pierre Béland, chair

The Team

David Boudreault, analyst
 Anne-Lyne Boutin, coordinator, commission secretariat
 Sophie Hamel-Dufour, analyst
 Louise Marois, secretary
 Catherine Roberge, communications specialist

With assistance from:
 Bernard Desrochers, computer layout
 Hélène Marchand, publication coordinator

Public Consultation

Preparatory Meetings

September 22 and October 3, 2006

Preparatory meetings held in the city of Québec

First part

October 16, 2006
 Municipal Hall
 Rivière-Saint-Jean

October 18, 2006
 Community Hall
 Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon

October 19, 2006, morning
 Innu Council of Pakua Shipu
 Pakuashipi

October 19, 2006, evening
 Gymnasium
 Saint-Augustin

Second part

November 21, 2006
Portail Pélagie Cormier
Havre-Saint-Pierre

November 22, 2006
Community Hall
Blanc-Sablon

November 23, 2006
Innu Council of Pakua Shipu
Pakuashipi

Proponent

Ministère du Développement durable, de
l'Environnement et des Parcs

Mr. Patrick Beauchesne, spokesperson
Mr. Rodolph Balej
Mr. Olivier Bérard
Mr. Vincent Desormeaux
Mr. Alain Gaudreault
Ms. Marilou Tremblay

Resource People

Mr. Sébastien Desrochers, spokesperson
Mr. Michel Flowers
Mr. Chad Joncas

Ministère des Ressources
naturelles et de la Faune

Ms. Stéphanie Élias

MRC de Minganie

Briefs

DM2
DM2.1

Mr. Armand Joncas, mayor

Municipalité de Blanc-Sablon

DM15

Mr. Camil Fequet, mayor

Municipalité de Saint-Augustin

DM1

Other assistance:

Association touristique régionale de Duplessis
Hydro-Québec
Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones

Participants

	Mémoires
Ms. Sylvie Angel	
Ms. Sylvie Basile and Mr. David Basile, members of the Mingan First Nation (Ekuanitshit)	Verbal and DM21
Mr. Gino Beaudoin	Verbal
Mr. Michel Beaudoin	
Mr. Therry Beaudoin	Verbal
Ms. Rachel Bilodeau	
Mr. Alain Carpentier	DM4
Mr. Fernand Dumas	
Mr. Jean-Sébastien Gravelle	
Mr. Roger Jones	
Mr. Charles Kavanagh	
Mr. Ilya Kivana and Ms. Amélie Robillard	DM11
Mr. Philippe Labadie	
Mr. Jerry Landry	Verbal
Mr. Marius Lavallée	Verbal
Mr. Perry Lavallée	
Mr. René Letto	
Mr. Claude Lussier	
Mr. Keith Maurice	
Mr. Dawson Osbourne	
Ms. Judith Roger	DM3

Mr. Yann Troutet		DM16
Mr. Jules Willcott		
Parks Canada Agency–Mingan Field Unit		DM24
Association de développement et de protection de l'environnement de la rivière Magpie		DM7
Association québécoise de la production d'énergie renouvelable		DM19
CLD de la Basse-Côte-Nord		DM5
Comité des citoyens de Magpie		DM6
Conférence régionale des élus de la Côte-Nord	Mr. Ghislain Lévesque Ms. Geneviève Morneau	DM14 DM14.1
Innu Council of Ekuanitshit and Mamu Pakatatau Mamit Assembly	Mr. Jean-Charles Piétacho, Chief	DM18 DM18.1
Innu Council of Pakua Shipu	Ms. Mary Mark, Chief Mr. Joël Bellefleur Mr. Maurice Bellefleur, councillor Ms. Alice Lalo Mr. Baudouin Lalo, interpreter Ms. Christiane Lalo Ms. Diane Lalo Ms. Francine Lalo Ms. Nina Maleck Ms. Cécile Mark Mr. Charles Mark, councillor Ms. Louisa Mark Mr. Mathias Mark Mr. Denis Mesténapéo, councillor Ms. Madeleine Mesténapéo Mr. Pierrot Mesténapéo, councillor Mr. Serge Mestokosho Mr. Camille Napess Mr. Andrew Poker Mr. Alain Sachel, advisor Mr. Raoul Vollant, interpreter	DM22

Conseil des maires de la Basse-Côte-Nord	Mr. Armand Joncas	DM20
Conseil régional de l'environnement de la Côte-Nord	Ms. Geneviève Pomerleau	DM8
Fondation Rivières		DM23
Groupe de citoyens spécialistes de l'eau vive (canot, kayak et rafting)	Mr. Jean-François Bourdon Mr. Mathieu Bourdon Mr. Philippe Bourdon Mr. Pierre Lévesque Mr. Sylvain Roy	DM9
Metis Inuit community in St. Augustin	Mr. Nicholas Shattler	DM17
Municipalité de Bonne-Espérance	Mr. Lionel Roberts	Verbal and DM25
Municipalité de Rivière-Saint-Jean	Mr. Michel Beaudin	
Nature Québec/UQCN	Ms. Adeline Bazoge	DM13 DM13.1
Odyssée Minganie inc.		DM12
Pouvoir du lac Magpie	Mr. Jean-Guy Labrie	
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society		DM10

In all, 25 briefs and 6 verbal presentations were submitted to the Commission.

Appendix 2

Documentation

Consultation Centres

Municipal office of the municipality of Blanc-Sablon Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon	MRC de Minganie Havre-Saint-Pierre
Municipal office of the municipality of Rivière-au-Tonnerre	Municipal office of the municipality of Saint-Augustin
Innu Council of Ekuanitshit Mingan	Innu Council of Pakua Shipu Pakuashipi
Université du Québec à Montréal Montréal	BAPE office Québec

Documentation tabled in connection with the projects under examination

Procedure

Note – As part of this public consultation process, the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks gave the BAPE two mandates, for which a single commission was appointed. Each mandate covers two proposed biodiversity reserves, making four in all. Some of the documents made available during the consultation concern individual projects; others apply to all. To facilitate consultation, the documents that relate to individual projects have been identified by adding a letter, as follows:

- (a) Documentation for the proposed biodiversity reserve for the foothills of Lac Guernesé
- (b) Documentation for the proposed biodiversity reserve for the Collines de Brador
- (c) Documentation for the proposed biodiversity reserve for the knolls of Lac aux Sauterelles
- (d) Documentation for the proposed biodiversity reserve for the massif of lakes Belmont and Magpie

PR1a MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Plan de conservation. Réserve de biodiversité projetée des basses collines du lac Guernesé*, septembre 2003, 8 pages.

PR1.1a MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Conservation plan. Guernesé lake foothills biodiversity reserve*, septembre 2003, 8 pages.

PR1b MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Plan de conservation. Réserve de biodiversité projetée des collines de Brador*, septembre 2003, 7 pages.

- PR1.1b** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Conservation plan. Brador hills biodiversity reserve*, septembre 2003, 7 pages.
- PR1c** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Plan de conservation. Réserve de biodiversité projetée des buttes du lac aux Sauterelles*, septembre 2003, 7 pages.
- PR1.1c** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Conservation plan. Lac aux Sauterelles knolls biodiversity reserve*, septembre 2003, 7 pages.
- PR1d** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Plan de conservation. Réserve de biodiversité projetée du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie*, septembre 2003, 7 pages.
- PR1.1d** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Conservation plan. Belmont and Magpie lakes massif biodiversity reserve*, septembre 2003, 7 pages.
- PR2** *Not applicable.*
- PR3ab** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Proposition de plan de conservation. Réserves de biodiversité des basses collines du lac Guernesé et des collines de Brador*, septembre 2006, 43 pages et cartes.
- PR3.1ab** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Proposed Conservation Plan for the Guernesé Lake Foothills and Brador Hills Biodiversity Reserves (Lower North Shore)*, septembre 2006, 43 pages et cartes.
- PR3cd** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Proposition de plan de conservation. Réserves de biodiversité du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie et des buttes du lac aux Sauterelles (Côte-Nord)*, septembre 2006, 41 pages et cartes.

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- DA1cd** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Réserves de biodiversité projetées du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie et des buttes du lac aux Sauterelles*, présentation du projet à Rivière-Saint-Jean, 16 octobre 2006, 6 pages et cartes.

- DA2ab** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Brador Hills and Guernesé Lake Foothills Proposed Biodiversity Reserves*, présentation du projet à Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon, 18 octobre 2006, 6 pages et cartes.
- DA3ab** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Réserves de biodiversité projetées des collines de Brador et des basses collines du lac Guernesé*, présentation du projet à Pakuashipi, 19 octobre 2006, 5 pages et carte.
- DA4ab** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Brador Hills and Guernesé Lake Foothills Proposed Biodiversity Reserves*, présentation du projet à Saint-Augustin, 19 octobre 2006, 6 pages et cartes.
- DA5** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Côte-Nord – Le réseau des aires protégées*, octobre 2005, carte.
- DA6** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *État de situation – Réseau des aires protégées au Québec*, 16 octobre 2006, 6 pages.
- DA6.1** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Overview – Protected Areas Network in Québec*, 10 octobre 2006, 6 pages.
- DA7d** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Justification des limites de la réserve de biodiversité projetée du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie (rive ouest du lac Magpie)*, 24 octobre 2006, 1 page.
- DA8** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Liste des rencontres organisées et des intervenants invités relativement aux projets de réserves de biodiversité projetées*, 15 novembre 2006, 4 pages.
- DA9** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Les 27 désignations d'aires protégées du Québec au 1^{er} octobre 2006*, 1 page.
- DA10** MINISTÈRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT, MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET SOCIÉTÉ DE LA FAUNE ET DES PARCS DU QUÉBEC. Extrait du *Plan d'action stratégique – Premiers résultats. Les aires protégées au Québec: une garantie pour l'avenir*, 2002, 6 pages.

By resource people

- DB1** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR FORÊT QUÉBEC. *État de situation*, 19 septembre 2006, 3 pages.

- DB2** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR DE L'ÉNERGIE ET DES MINES. *État de situation*, 19 septembre 2006, 5 pages.
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- DB3** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR DU TERRITOIRE. *État de situation*, 1^{er} septembre 2006, 8 pages.
- DB3.1ab** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR DU TERRITOIRE. *Réserves de biodiversité projetées des collines de Brador et des basses collines du lac Guernesé. Droits fonciers consentis*, 3^e trimestre 2006, carte.
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- DB4** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR FAUNE QUÉBEC. *État de situation*, septembre 2006, 7 pages.
- DB4.1ab** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR FAUNE QUÉBEC. *Pourvoiries, secteurs Guernesé et Brador*, carte.
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- DB5cd** MRC DE MINGANIE. *Extraits du schéma d'aménagement et de développement de la MRC de Minganie – 1988*, pagination diverse.
- DB6** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR FAUNE QUÉBEC. *Résultats des inventaires de caribous forestiers – Côte-Nord (1991-2005)*, 14 septembre 2005, 4 pages.
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- DB8** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE – SECTEUR FAUNE QUÉBEC. *La protection de la faune au Québec*, dépliant.
- DB9** MRC DE MINGANIE. *Document sur les objets de la révision (DOR) de la MRC de Minganie*, 1997, 57 pages.

- DB10** MRC DE MINGANIE. *Réponses aux questions de la commission relatives à la séance du 20 novembre dernier (DT5)*, 14 décembre 2006, 3 pages.

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- DC1d** Sylvain ARCHAMBAULT. Extrait de *Région naturelle n°20 « Les hautes-terres boréales laurentiennes »*. *Synthèse des connaissances et analyse comparative de trois sites d'intérêt: rivières Manitou, Magpie et Mingan*, rapport présenté au ministère du Patrimoine canadien, Agence Parcs Canada, mai 2002, 10 pages.
- DC2d** FONDATION RIVIÈRES. *Réserve de biodiversité projetée du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie. Liste de questions*, 19 octobre 2006, 3 pages.
- DC3d** NATURE QUÉBEC/UQCN. *Question relative à la réserve de biodiversité projetée du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie*, 16 octobre 2006, 1 page.
- DC4** SOCIÉTÉ POUR LA NATURE ET LES PARCS DU CANADA. *Quatre projets de réserves de biodiversité dans la province naturelle du Plateau de la Basse-Côte-Nord. Questions préliminaires adressées à la commission*, 12 octobre 2006, 4 pages.
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- DD1** HYDRO-QUÉBEC TRANSÉNERGIE. *Raccordement du complexe de la Romaine au réseau de transport*, bulletin d'information n° 1, automne 2005, 7 pages.

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- DQ1** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Questions adressées au promoteur concernant la sélection des quatre aires protégées à l'étude, le choix de leur statut de protection, l'élaboration des plans de conservation de même que l'analyse pour chacun des territoires d'intérêt répertoriés lors de l'évaluation des impacts économiques potentiels des aires protégées candidates pour la province naturelle de la Basse-Côte-Nord*, 31 octobre 2006, 1 page.
- DQ1.1** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Réponse à la question 1 du document DQ1*, 16 novembre 2006, 2 pages.

- DQ1.2** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Réponses aux questions 2, 3 et 4 des documents DQ1, DQ2, DQ5 et DQ7b, ainsi qu'à une demande de la commission à la séance publique du 21 novembre dernier sur les intervenants rencontrés dans la Basse-Côte-Nord au sujet des réserves de biodiversité projetées de Brador et de Guernesé, 7 décembre 2006, 8 pages. (La réponse à la question 2 a été formulée conjointement avec le ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune.)*
- DQ2** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Questions adressées au ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune sur les grands objectifs et orientations prévus dans le Plan régional de développement du territoire public de la Basse-Côte-Nord actuellement en élaboration de même que sur l'analyse pour chacun des territoires d'intérêt répertoriés lors de l'évaluation des impacts économiques potentiels des aires protégées candidates pour la province naturelle de la Basse-Côte-Nord, 31 octobre 2006, 1 page.*
- DQ2.1** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE. *Réponse à la question 1 du document DQ2 et complément d'information relatif aux séances publiques, 21 novembre 2006, 4 pages et 2 cartes. (La réponse à la question 2 du document DQ2 est contenue dans le document DQ1.2.)*
- DQ3** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Questions adressées à Hydro-Québec sur l'analyse fournie au ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune concernant la consultation dans le cadre de la désignation de la réserve de biodiversité projetée du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie déterminant les contraintes qu'imposent les limites de ce projet sur le potentiel hydroélectrique, incluant les liens électriques requis pour le transport de l'énergie produite, ainsi que sur l'état de situation et le potentiel du ou des projets pouvant avoir lieu sur la rivière Magpie et les différentes rivières sur le territoire de la MRC de Minganie et de la Basse-Côte-Nord, 2 novembre 2006, 2 pages.*
- DQ3.1** HYDRO-QUÉBEC. *Réponses aux questions du document DQ3, 24 novembre 2006, 2 pages.*
- DQ4ab** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Questions adressées au Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones concernant l'historique de la communauté innue de Pakusashipi, l'occupation du territoire, le rôle particulier de la communauté dans le cadre des négociations territoriales en cours, les activités traditionnelles et autre information pertinente à la compréhension des enjeux relatifs à l'occupation du territoire sur les projets de réserves de biodiversité des basses collines du lac Guernesé et des collines de Brador, 3 novembre 2006, 2 pages.*
- DQ4ab.1** SECRÉTARIAT AUX AFFAIRES AUTOCHTONES. *Réponses aux questions du document DQ4ab, 17 janvier 2007, 3 pages.*

- DQ5** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Question adressée au promoteur relative à la mise en place de mécanismes visant à assurer la gestion et la pérennité de réserves de biodiversité projetées et la participation des communautés locales, incluant les communautés innues de Pakua Shipu et Ekuanitshit, 28 novembre 2006, 1 page. (La réponse à la question 3 du document DQ5 est contenue dans le document DQ1.2.)*
- DQ6** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Question adressée au ministre des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune sur les probabilités d'activités d'exploration ou d'exploitation minière dans le passé concernant les quatre projets de réserves de biodiversité, 1^{er} décembre 2006, 1 page.*
- DQ6.1** MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DE LA FAUNE. *Réponse à la question du document DQ6, 19 décembre 2006, 3 pages.*
- DQ7b** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Question adressée au promoteur sur les raisons du changement de statut de protection permanent envisagé pour le territoire des collines de Brador de réserve écologique à celui de réserve de biodiversité, 1^{er} décembre 2006, 1 page. (La réponse à la question 4 du document DQ7b est contenue dans le document DQ1.2.)*
- DQ8** BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Question adressée au promoteur relative à l'article 34 de la Loi sur la conservation du patrimoine naturel, 12 décembre 2006, 1 page.*
- DQ8.1** MINISTÈRE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES PARCS. *Réponse à la question du document DQ8, 13 décembre 2006, 2 pages.*

Transcriptions

BUREAU D'AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT. *Projets de réserves de biodiversité du massif des lacs Belmont et Magpie, des buttes du lac aux Sauterelles, des basses collines du lac Guernesé et des collines de Brador dans la province naturelle du Plateau de la Basse-Côte-Nord.*

- DT1** Sitting held on October 16, 2006 in the evening at Rivière-Saint-Jean, 93 pages.
- DT1.1** *Errata* for transcription DT1, p. 88, November 13, 2006, 3 pages.
- DT2** Sitting held on October 18, 2006 in the evening at Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon, 131 pages.
- DT3** Sitting held on October 19, 2006 in the morning at Pakuashipi, 31 pages.
- DT3.1** *Errata* for transcription DT3, list of participants, November 14, 2006, 2 pages.

- DT4** Sitting held on October 19, 2006 in the evening at Saint-Augustin, 57 pages.
- DT5** Sitting held on November 21, 2006 in the evening at Havre-Saint-Pierre, 90 pages.
- DT6** Sitting held on November 22, 2006 in the evening at Blanc-Sablon, 84 pages.
- DT7** Sitting held on November 23, 2006 in the morning at Pakuashipi, 34 pages.