

## **The stakes related to seismic surveys in the St. Lawrence Gulf and Estuary**

### **BAPE PRESIDENT INTRODUCES THE COMMISSION MANDATED TO CONDUCT THE INQUIRY AND PUBLIC HEARING**

**Québec City, March 15th, 2004** – The President of the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE), Mr. André Harvey, introduced the Commission members mandated to conduct an inquiry and public hearing on the stakes involved in seismic surveys in the St. Lawrence gulf and estuary. Mr. Harvey has appointed Mr. Michel Germain as Chairperson of the Commission, assisted by Commissioners Mr. Pierre André and Mr. Jacques Locat.

This inquiry and public hearing mandate entrusted to BAPE by Environment Minister Mr. Thomas J. Mulcair, begins today March 15th, 2004 and will conclude when the BAPE report is tabled with the Minister, no later than August 31, 2004.

#### **COMMISSION MEMBERS**

##### **Mr. Michel Germain**

Trained as a Geomorphologist, Mr. Germain also graduated with a Master's Degree in Water Science from the Institut national de la recherche scientifique. A full-time BAPE member from 1992 to 1995 and part-time since 2002, Mr. Germain has acted as both Chairperson and Commissioner assessing many projects notably cogeneration projects in Québec City and Hull, as well as the Sainte-Marguerite 3 hydroelectric station.

A self-employed environmental consultant since 1995, Mr. Germain has participated in many environmental assessments and impact studies, including road projects, telecommunications lines, hydro lines, wharf rehabilitation and bank stabilization projects. In 2000, he participated in the public consultations of Québec City Port Authority related to the proposed cruise ship terminal in Pointe-à-Carcy.

##### **Mr. Pierre André**

A biologist by trade (aquatic ecology) and currently an associate professor of the human environment with the Geography Department at the Université de Montréal, Mr. André has acquired solid expertise in the natural resources management and environment assessment. His particular area of interest is social construction of space, for which he has developed expertise working on various projects, notably in relation to climate environment and protected space. Mr. André is also the principal author of the book *Évaluation des impacts sur l'environnement. Processus, acteurs et pratique pour un développement durable (1999-2003)*. He works on projects and directs students for projects in Québec, Brazil, China, and Africa. He has also headed eco-industrial toxicology programs and environmental studies at the Université de Montréal (1989-1990).

### **Mr. Jacques Locat**

A member of Québec-Océan research team of Université Laval, Mr. Locat is also Vice-President (North America) of the International Association of Engineering and Environmental Geology and sits on the Board of Directors for the Centre interdisciplinaire sur la cartographie des Océans. As an Engineer Geologist and full professor at Université Laval, Mr. Locat contributes his expertise to the European Economic Community (EEC) assessing research programs on marine ecosystems.

His contribution to understanding the physical and sedimentological aspects of underwater slides, have notably led to participation in various seminars and conferences in France, London and elsewhere. As a member of the expert audit committee on the proposed Ormen Lange gas development in Norway between 2002 and 2003, Mr. Locat was senior editor of the reports of the *First International Symposium on Submarine Mass Movements and their consequences*, held in Nice in 2003.

Throughout the public consultation process, the Commission will be supported in their efforts by analysts, communication advisors and technical personnel.

#### **INQUIRY AND PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS**

In the coming days the Commission will unveil the process by which it will gather the questions, concerns and opinions of citizens and groups. This inquiry and public hearing mandate will proceed in two parts: the first part will provide both the general public and the Commission with an opportunity to develop a more profound understanding of the issues involved in seismic surveys and clarify the stakes involved in the St. Lawrence gulf and estuary. The second part of the Commission mandate will be devoted to hearing briefs and verbal opinions presented by the participants.

The Committee's report, publicly-released on March 5th, 2004 by the Ministre de l'Environnement and the Ministre des Ressources naturelles, de la Faune et des Pares, is now available on the BAPE website at: [www.bape.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.bape.gouv.qc.ca). This report will be accessible as of March 17, 2004 in reading rooms set up for the purpose of this topic. The list of these reading rooms is now available at the BAPE website.

The Commission will begin the first part of the public hearing in April.

For further information, please contact Ms. Danielle Dallaire, coordinator of the Commission's secretariat, or Ms. Marie-Ève Chamberland, Communications Advisor at: (418) 643-7447 or 1 800 463-4732 (toll-free). The Commission can also be contacted by e-mail at: [sismiques@bape.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:sismiques@bape.gouv.qc.ca).

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