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Comité consultatif de l'environnement Kativik
Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee

MINUTES OF THE 122ND MEETING

(APPROVED)

DATE: January 11, 12 and 13, 2010

PLACE: Kativik Regional Government, Kuujuaq

PRESENT:

Kativik Regional Government (KRG) appointees:

Michael Barrett, Chairperson
Charlie Arngak

Government of Canada appointees:

Claude Abel
Gilles H. Tremblay

Québec government appointees:

Paule Halley
Sylvie Létourneau
Jean Couture

Executive Secretary:

Stéphanie Benoit

ABSENT:

James Yantha, Government of Canada appointee
Adamie Kalingo, Vice-President, KRG appointee

GUESTS:

Jean-Denis Brière, Assistant Director, Building Maintenance and
Asset Management Section, Administration Department, KRG
Nancy Dea, Environmental Consultant
Dr. Serge Déry, Director of Public Health, NRBHSS
Mélicca Gagnon, Environmental Officer, Renewable Resources,
Environmental and Land Use Planning
Department, KRG

Simon Ricard, Project Manager, Municipal Public Works
Department, KRG
François Turgeon, Maintenance Foreman, Administration
Department, KRG

1. Call to order and adoption of the agenda

The 122nd meeting of the Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee (KEAC) began at 2:30 p.m. on January 11, 2010, in Kuujuaq. The Chairperson invited the members to suggest changes to the agenda and it was adopted unanimously. The meeting took place in accordance with the agenda shown below.

1. Call to order and adoption of the agenda
2. Review of the minutes of the 118th, 119th, 120th and 121st meetings and the conference call on November 23, 2009
3. Business arising from the 121st meeting and correspondence
 - a) Northern Plan
 - b) Section 23 of JBNQA
4. Budget, secretariat and members
 - a) Secretary
 - b) Annual report 2008–2009
 - c) Budget update
 - d) Internal management
5. Drinking water quality
 - a) Drinking water recommendations
6. Québec Mineral Strategy
 - a) Letter from Serge Simard
7. Residual materials management
 - a) Draft *Québec Residual Materials Management Policy*
 - b) Residual hazardous materials guides
 - c) Environmental inspection report: 2009 Guerrier Nordique military exercise
 - d) Abandoned barrels at Kuujuaapik
8. Parks and protected areas
9. KEAC website
 - a) Statistics
 - b) Additions, modifications and standardization
10. Miscellaneous
 - a) Phénix de l'environnement
 - b) Greenhouse project
 - c) Memorandum of understanding – Canada, the U.S. and Mexico
 - d) Logging industry development
11. Date and place of the next meeting

2. Review of the minutes of the 118th, 119th, 120th and 121st meetings and the conference call on November 23, 2009

The members suggested a few minor changes to the French versions of the minutes of the 118th, 119th and 120th meetings before adopting them. The members asked the Executive Secretary to transmit the documents to the parties, to post them on the KEAC website, and to prepare the minutes of the conference call held on September 4, 2009. The adoption of the minutes of the 121st meeting and the conference call held on November 23, 2009, was postponed to the next meeting.

3. Business arising from the 121st meeting and correspondence

a) Northern Plan

Further to the meeting concerning the Northern Plan held in November 2009 that they attended with 215 other stakeholders, two members reported on the different topics covered. It is very important that the KEAC remain involved in this project. The day of consultations allowed the members to gain insight into the Northern Plan project proposed by the Québec government.

Further to this meeting, the KEAC decided to take a few steps. The first was to transmit a letter in December 2009 to Nathalie Normandeau (the Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife and the Minister responsible for the Northern Plan). The letter stressed the importance of the KEAC's participation in the project and inquired about the difference between the mandates of the Northern Plan and the Regional Commission on Natural Resources and the Territory in Nunavik. In the letter, the KEAC also proposed that the Québec government make environmental protection a major part of the Northern Plan and that it develop a comprehensive vision by subjecting the Plan to a strategic environmental assessment. This last point was discussed by the members.

The second KEAC action has been to increase its understanding of the new tourism strategy under the Northern Plan. For this purpose, the members asked that a presentation be organized at a future meeting. The KEAC is concerned by the fact that mass tourism development could generate environmental and social impacts.

Finally, the members reviewed recent developments related to the Northern Plan. It was noted that new developments are posted on the website <http://www.plannord.gouv.qc.ca/presse.asp> allowing for easy monitoring. As well, it was mentioned that the Partners' Discussion Table under the Northern Plan consists of 27 representatives and does not include the KEAC. The Table is supposed to meet soon. A member informed the KEAC that a partners' meeting would take place in the summer of 2010.

b) Section 23 of the JBNQA

The members followed up on the May 2009 publication and dissemination of the KEAC position paper on strengthening the environmental and social impact assessment and review procedure in Nunavik. The Executive Secretary informed the members that the position paper is now posted on the KEAC website. Since the KEAC has still not received any response from the parties, it was proposed that discussion of this topic be postponed for a few weeks.

4. Budget, secretariat and members

a) Secretary

As decided at the 121st meeting, Ms. Benoit was appointed at the beginning of January to the position of Executive Secretary for one year. The members signed the resolutions officially recognizing Ms. Benoit's appointment and giving her signing authority for the KEAC's bank accounts.

The members took advantage of this opportunity to inform the Executive Secretary of the deadlines for receiving translated documents such as agendas, meeting minutes, etc. The members also directed the Executive Secretary to develop a management tool that would facilitate the tracking of files and actions to be completed. It was suggested that a follow-up table, including a thematic action list be prepared and forwarded to the members before each meeting.

b) Annual report 2008–2009

The Executive Secretary informed the members that she had received the Inuktitut version of the annual report and that the French version was expected shortly. The latter will be forwarded to the members for comment to be discussed during the conference call.

c) Budget update

The members reviewed the general expenses incurred between April 1 and December 31, 2009, as well as those expected before the end of the fiscal year.

d) Internal management

The members discussed how to communicate to the Québec government their wish to improve the procedure for appointing chairpersons and vice-chairpersons when it is the government's responsibility. They asked that a short letter be transmitted to the provincial administrator requesting that the appointment procedure be simplified.

5. Drinking water quality

a) Drinking water recommendations

As requested at the 121st meeting, the members received from Benoit Barbeau (Associate Professor, Industrial Research Chair in Drinking Water Treatment and Distribution for the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council, *École*

Polytechnique de Montréal) a letter concerning the findings of the research project on drinking water tank cleaning and related recommendations based on three variables: needs, frequency and techniques. Since drinking water quality is a major public health challenge, the findings and recommendations were transmitted to the sponsors for comment. For this purpose, Messrs Brière, Ricard and Turgeon from the KRG, and Mr. Déry from the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS) joined the meeting. To begin, they underlined the scientific value of the research project and report. All agreed that the findings are further confirmation of their own professional experience to the effect that drinking water tanks do not require monthly cleaning. A review of scientific literature performed by the NRBHSS had already demonstrated this point. Moreover, the guests also agreed that it is better to not clean drinking water tanks than to clean them inadequately.

The guests nonetheless expressed reserves concerning the frequency of cleaning. To offset expensive and unnecessary cleaning in some cases, they suggested that the frequency of cleaning could be standardized in all the villages and simple residential drinking water quality sampling could be carried out. The members were also informed about certain current projects, such as the implementation of water chlorination and the installation of more effective filters, aimed at controlling water quality. The guests also questioned the recommended cleaning methods as well as the physical and financial resources required for high-pressure water jet cleaning. It was suggested that a specialized team could be responsible for cleaning. Finally, one guest questioned the external validity of the results and advised that a second project should be carried out in Nunavik. He even proposed a pilot project at Puvirnituk or Inukjuak, for example, in which water and biofilm quality could be monitored. Possible funding sources for such a pilot project were discussed.

In order to promote the dissemination of information, the KEAC decided to propose to Mr. Barbeau that he present the findings and recommendations of his research to the KRG Council at its sitting scheduled to take place in February 2010 in Kuujuaq. Notwithstanding, it is clear to the members that these results are preliminary and that pilot projects will be necessary to identify the best methods for managing drinking water tanks.

6. Québec Mineral Strategy

a) Letter from Serge Simard

Further to the letter transmitted by the KEAC to Nathalie Normandeau (the Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife) in September 2009, Serge Simard (the Minister responsible for Natural Resources and Wildlife) transmitted a written response covering various aspects of mining development. Specifically, Mr. Simard provided assurance that Northern environmental protection regimes will continue to be applied (the regimes stipulated in sections 22 and 23 of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* (JBNQA) and Chapter 2 of the *Environment Quality Act*). He stated that buffer zones for protected areas should

only be considered when necessary. He listed different organizations that promote Inuit participation. He mentioned the revision of the *Mining Act* and the role of the future Regional Commission on Natural Resources and the Territory in Nunavik. And he stated that he would like to see the use of existing infrastructure maximized.

The members discussed the different issues raised in the letter, including funding for training and job creation in the field of mineral exploration in Nunavik. It was also noted that the KEAC has not been consulted concerning the draft *Mining Act*. Since the members would like to be consulted, the Executive Secretary was directed to inform the representative of the *ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune* (natural resources and wildlife).

7. Residual materials management

a) Draft Québec Residual Materials Management Policy

Ms. Dea in her capacity as environmental consultant and Ms. Gagnon of the KRG joined the meeting. As discussed during the conference call held on November 23, 2009, Ms. Dea was invited to present the elements of the draft *Québec Residual Materials Management Policy* and the draft *Regulation respecting the Recovery and Reclamation of Products by Enterprises* which are applicable in Nunavik. Among other issues, the members discussed the considerable cost involved in transporting residual materials to the South and the importance of clarifying the definition of the Northern areas covered in these documents. Overall, the members believe that the proposed avenues represent progress for Nunavik.

Given the tight consultation timetable to produce specific comments for the Québec government, it was proposed that a letter be drafted based on the general comments made by the members regarding the draft policy and the draft regulation and that this letter be forwarded to Madeleine Paulin (the Deputy Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks). Since residual materials management is an important topic and it has been a major concern of the KEAC for quite some time, namely through its participation in the working group, the members reiterated their intention to participate in discussions on the development of a residual materials management strategy scheduled to take place at a special meeting organized by the KRG at the end of January 2010 in Kuujuaq. The members agreed that the Chairperson and the Executive Secretary should attend the meeting along with the former working group and report back to them at a future meeting.

b) Residual hazardous materials guides

Ms. Dea presented the project to produce three guides on residual hazardous materials. A first guide will be designed for the villages and regional organizations that handle and store residual hazardous materials. A second guide will target the general public, schools and other organizations. A third guide

will be designed for the villages and regional organizations that are responsible for responding to emergency situations, such as spills. The members discussed various aspects related to the preparation of the guides with a view to ensuring that they will be practical and simple to use. These aspects included regulations, the preferred format of the guides (each guide will total five to 10 pages) and production stages after the design work has been completed. At the next meeting, Ms. Dea will submit an accurate assessment of the production costs. As well, a draft version of the guides (transmitted to the members before the meeting) will be revised.

c) Environmental inspection report: 2009 Guerrier Nordique military exercise

In November 2009, the KEAC received the environmental inspection report regarding the Guerrier Nordique military exercise carried out at Kuujuaq from March 1 to 6, 2009 by the Canadian Armed Forces. The members discussed several environmental challenges referred to in the report. Although they agree with the suggested recommendations, the members discussed logistical improvements that should also be made. Some members pointed out that the Armed Forces must comply with the *Environment Quality Act* and verify the authorizations necessary for military exercises. The members also discussed the Screening Committee decision to exempt the military exercise from the federal environmental and social assessment procedure provided under Section 23 of the JBNQA.

It was mentioned that the proposed recommendations do not cover all the environmental problems raised, in particular in relation to ammunition, the location of the exercise, the disposal of residual materials and wastewater, as well as the cutting of trees. The members were nonetheless pleased that the Armed Forces are interested in improving their environmental practices.

Although the next similar military exercise will take place at Chisasibi, a village located in the James Bay region, the members decided to forward their comments by letter to Claude Langlois (Environmental Director at the Department of National Defence).

d) Abandoned barrels at Kuujjuaraapik

Abandoned barrels at Kuujjuaraapik have been a topic of concern for the KEAC for quite some time. They have still not been collected for proper storage and disposal. The members discussed the cause of the delays, which have now stretched over a number of years. The last report available from the *ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs* (sustainable development, environment and parks, MDDEP) states that on-site testing shows no signs of leaching and that the petroleum product waste is stable. Moreover, the site remains a regional priority since it is still on the Québec list of soil and industrial waste sites, and the KEAC is aware that the firm Dessau inc. and an MDDEP regional branch representative visited the site in November 2009. The purpose of the visit was to collect information on the site that could be studied in order to find a way to reclaim or eliminate the barrels, bitumen and contaminated soil. The members asked that follow-up be carried out so that they remain

informed of the progress of the project and the planned actions. The Executive Secretary will take the necessary steps.

8. Parks and protected areas

A member summarized recent developments regarding parks and protected areas in Nunavik. With respect to parks, it was mentioned that *parc national Kuururjuaq* was officially created by the National Assembly in May 2009. To date, a park director has been appointed (Annie Baron) and several decisions concerning infrastructure development, for example concerning a garage and a warehouse, have been made.

With respect to *parc national Tursujuq*, the Kativik Environmental Quality Commission (KEQC) submitted to Madeleine Paulin (the Deputy Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks) in November 2009 its decision concerning the park project. The Québec government has not yet stated its position on this topic pursuant to the *Parks Act*. The members discussed the process necessary to have the Nastapoka River integrated into the park and the importance for Inuit that the entire watershed be included in the park.

Concerning protected areas, there are few new developments, except that a proposal is on the table. The KRG has proposed an 18-month consultation process that it would carry out with MDDEP funding. Following the consultation process, the identified areas could be recommended by various organizations, subjected to environmental and social assessment in accordance with Section 23 of the JBNQA, and then approved by the Québec government.

As well, the members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of converting certain category I lands into protected areas.

9. KEAC website

a) Statistics

The Executive Secretary informed the members that an Internet link has been added to enable them to verify statistics related to visits to the KEAC website. She provided definitions for several terms to help understand the statistics. The members discussed various results and noted that the number of visits to the site has doubled since the site was first put online. Last fall, the site was visited between 1700 and 2000 times monthly, which is significant. Moreover, the results indicate that the visitors are from Northern countries.

b) Additions, modifications and standardization

Since the website is an important tool for showcasing the activities of the KEAC, the members asked that the site be updated and that the presentation of certain data be improved. The Executive Secretary informed the members of the many adjustments to be made.

The members agreed in particular that links to the organizations identified in the KEAC's 2009–2014 five-year action plan should be included on the "Links" page. The members discussed the necessity of keeping the "What's new" page. It was suggested that recently added files be listed and made available for consultation on this page. Finally, it was suggested that "Comments" and "Contact us" pages be joined together.

10. Miscellaneous

a) Phénix de l'environnement

A member pointed out that the 13th edition of the *Phénix de l'environnement* was being organized by the MDDEP and that new categories requiring nominations had been proposed: individuals and organizations are being invited to submit nominations for environmental projects carried out in 2009. The members discussed the change and stressed the importance for the KEAC to recognize Nunavik environmental initiatives.

One member suggested that the KEAC nominate Mr. Yaaka of Kangiqsujuaq. For several years, this individual has invested a great deal in his community, by encouraging residents to properly dispose of waste from hunting and fishing sites, by fighting to protect the region from mining pollution and by participating in the creation of *parc national des Pingualuit*. He also succeeded in allowing fish to return to their original lakes and contributed to the protection of arctic char.

The Executive Secretary was directed to verify if the KEAC could support Mr. Yaaka's nomination by preparing his file. If the applicable criteria are too restrictive for this nomination, the members proposed to write to the MDDEP in order to request changes to the categories that would allow Nunavimmiut to participate. As well, it was mentioned that the KEAC could organize its own environmental awards event. This topic will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

b) Greenhouse project

The Executive Secretary explained that Ellen Avard, a Master's student in Geography at *Université Laval* had asked the KEAC to provide support for current studies related to the development of a not-for-profit greenhouse project. Besides promoting sustainable development, the project would permit Kuujuaq to grow fruit and vegetables locally in a greenhouse. The project's expected social, economic and environmental spinoffs have been well received by local and regional entrepreneurs, public officials, as well as professionals. The members questioned whether Ms. Avard's request falls under its mandate. Although they support the idea of the project, the members are unable to take an official position before studying a specific project proposal. It was suggested that a letter be transmitted to Ms. Avard to request clarifications.

c) Memorandum of understanding between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico

A *Canadian Press* article in November 2009 announced that Jim Prentice (Canadian Minister of the Environment) had signed a memorandum of understanding with the United States and Mexico to promote wilderness conservation through the development of a network of protected land and marine areas and the monitoring of protected species. The terms and conditions of the agreement remain to be identified, along with any related resource envelopes. A member and the Executive Secretary will try to find more related details before the next meeting.

d) Logging industry development

The members followed up on the lumber and wood heating project for the Kuujjuaq area put forward by the Makivik Corporation and the local landholding corporation. The findings of the feasibility study concluded that the project is not economically feasible. For this reason, commercial logging will not be developed.

11. Date and place of the next meeting

The KEAC's 123rd meeting will take place on March 2 and 3, 2010, in Quebec City.



Stéphanie Benoit
Executive Secretary
June 15, 2010