

Kuujjuaq, October 20 2023

Christine Gélinas
Directrice de la protection des espèces et des milieux naturels
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Subject: Amendments to the Act respecting threatened or vulnerable species, the

Natural Heritage Conservation Act and the Act respecting the conservation

and development of wildlife

Dear Madam Director

The Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee (KEAC) is the official forum for the responsible governments of Nunavik to participate in the development of laws and regulations pertaining to the environmental and social protection regime set out in Section 23 of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The KEAC also provides technical assistance in the management of residual and hazardous materials to the Kativik Regional Government (KRG), the northern villages and Inuit of Nunavik, and the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach, where applicable.

In Nunavik, the KRG provides technical assistance to the 14 northern villages in environmental and land-use planning matters. It is the link between the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs, the Nunavik region and the northern villages. In particular, the KRG is responsible for planning protected areas and implementing the Kativik Regional Master Plan (2020).

Below you will find comments on the main issues raised by the proposed amendments to the regulations mentioned in the subject of this letter. These comments have been formulated in collaboration with the KRG.

Comments on the proposed amendments to the LEMV

We are generally in favor of the proposed amendments, particularly the inclusion of activities likely to harm individuals of threatened or vulnerable species, and the identification of areas of occupancy on the plan. The clarification of the documents that may be requested is also a relevant amendment, insofar as the details of the elements that the Minister must consider before issuing an authorization, as well as the situations in which he may not issue an authorization, are quite specific to each threatened or vulnerable species. However, we are concerned about the possibility of broadening the Minister's powers to authorize the carrying out of so-called prohibited activities, both on habitats and on individuals. Destroying the habitat or an individual of a

threatened or vulnerable species is no less deleterious when carried out with the Ministry's approval. Financial compensation is not enough to mitigate the impact of biodiversity loss, particularly for sensitive species and in northern environments. At present, this compensation does not really make it possible to recreate environments that are equivalent in quality and quantity to natural environments. The Minister's authorization power should be limited to specific activities required for public safety or in emergencies and should not open the door to activities that could result in the destruction of sensitive species and their habitats for economic development. In all cases, adequate consultation processes must be planned for.

Comments on the proposed amendments to the LCPN

We support the amendments aimed at clarifying which activities are prohibited in natural environments designated by a plan, and the identification of these prohibited activities should be specific to each natural environment protected by a plan. However, we are concerned about the risk that activities deemed prohibited may be carried out with authorization. In the document provided for consultation, it is mentioned that "the Minister must, before authorizing an activity carried out in a natural environment protected by a plan, take into consideration the fact that such environments should in principle be maintained in their natural state". We believe that this sentence should not be conditional, and that authorizations issued by the Minister should at all times ensure that environments are maintained in their natural state, rather than include a provision for compensation through the implementation of other measures to conserve, restore or create such environments.

Comments on the proposed amendments to the LCMVF

We have no comments on the proposed amendments to this law.

Best regards,

Raymond Mickpegak Chairperson, KEAC

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Véronique Gilbert Assistant-Director, KRG Renewable Resources, Environment, Lands and Parks