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Comité consultatif de l'environnement Kativik  
Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee

March 8, 2024

Marilou Gosselin  
Coordinator  
Decarbonation and Energy Efficiency Expertise Department  
Office of Climate and Energy Transition (BTCE), MELCCFP  
1300 du Blizzard Street, Suite 200  
Quebec City, QC  
G2K 0G9

**SUBJECT: The KEAC's feedback on prohibiting the sale of new gasoline-powered light motor vehicles in Quebec by 2035 and Québec's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.**

On January 19, 2024, the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP) held a virtual meeting with the Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee (KEAC), Kativik Regional Government (KRG), Makivvik, Tarquti, Nunavik Municipal Housing Bureau and the Fédération de Coopératives du Nouveau-Québec (FCNQ). The objective of the meeting was to present the broad outlines of the upcoming regulation prohibiting the sale of new gasoline-powered light motor vehicles in Quebec by 2035, part of the Quebec government's efforts to comply with global agreements to reduce greenhouse gases, as well as 2023 Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.

On this occasion, several questions and concerns were expressed regarding the ban on the sale of light-duty gasoline vehicles by 2035 and the deployment of a public charging network for electric vehicles in Nunavik. Given the context of the Nunavik territory, the KEAC would like to bring to your attention some of the issues expressed at the meeting.

**Context**

As a reminder, the Nunavik region covers an area of 507,000 km<sup>2</sup> with 14 Northern Villages with a population of 90% Inuit. There are nearly 4,000 residential, commercial, and public buildings in the region, all of which rely exclusively on diesel for electricity generation. It is estimated that these villages consume on average 23 million liters of diesel per year, which produces approximately 65,000 tons of carbon dioxide annually. Additionally, in Nunavik, 97% of buildings are owned by organizations, not individuals. It is equally important to note that there are also three active mines in the region.

Petroleum products represent the primary source of electricity production, transportation, and heating in the region. A consequence of this dependence on petroleum products includes spills related to insufficient monitoring, accidents and human error, vandalism, as well as inefficient, outdated, or maladapted equipment.

KEAC Secretariat  
P.O. Box 930, Kuujuaq QC J0M 1C0  
Tel.: 819-964-2961, ext. 2287  
Fax: 819-964-0694  
Email: [bpatenaude@krg.ca](mailto:bpatenaude@krg.ca)

Most importantly, Nunavik is not connected to the southern part of the province via a road network. Diesel and other petroleum products, as well as vehicle and parts, are transported by cargo ship to the 14 northern villages during the ice-free months (approximately June to October) thereby significantly increasing the amount of greenhouse gas generated by this system in addition to its high cost.

It is also worthy to note that different regional organizations have explored alternatives to the current system including wind, solar, tidal, thermal, and geothermal. For example, there is a run-of-the-river hydro-electric project in the community of Inukjuak, as well as a windfarm project currently under review for the community of Kuujuaapik. Tarquti Energy Corporation, a joint venture between the FCNQ and Makivvik, is working with communities to develop renewable energy projects locally and to build a knowledge base and Inuit expertise in the field of renewable energies. Despite these initiatives and the will of the region's inhabitants to move away from a diesel-based electricity system, resources are lacking to explore and realize alternative energy projects.

### **Questions and Concerns expressed at the January 19, 2024, meeting**

Participants agreed that reducing the number of gasoline-powered vehicles in the region would contribute to the Quebec government's objective of reducing greenhouse gases. However, questions remain. It was noted that Nunavik's dependence on petroleum products, coupled with the limitations of existing infrastructure to supply the energy needed to recharge vehicles, represents a significant challenge to the electrification of transportation. It was emphasized that the priority should be to develop renewable energy projects in the communities, to prevent the addition of electric vehicles from increasing diesel-generated electricity consumption and, consequently, overall greenhouse gas emissions.

In addition, given that a lifecycle analysis of electric cars has been carried out for southern Quebec, it seems just as relevant to carry out a similar analysis for Nunavik, with the aim of ensuring in advance that replacing gasoline cars with electric cars does not increase the region's overall greenhouse gas emissions.

The complex issue of managing damaged and end-of-life vehicles for northern villages was also highlighted. For example, transporters may refuse to take damaged batteries on board, while the storage of damaged or used batteries and vehicles, when required, represents a significant burden for Nunavik's isolated communities. To reduce this burden, it is suggested that electric vehicles, if not all vehicles, be included in the list of products subject to extended producer responsibility.

Comments were made that the price of electric vehicles is currently higher than the average for gasoline-powered vehicles, and that although subsidies are available, they will be phased out as demand increases and prices fall. Given the absence of charging stations in Nunavik, Nunavimmiut are currently unable to purchase electric vehicles and take advantage of these subsidies. They are therefore at a disadvantage compared to the population of southern Quebec. To redress the balance and encourage the purchase of electric vehicles in Nunavik, it is suggested that a subsidy program be created for Nunavik residents once village infrastructures can support the addition of electric vehicles.

As the mechanics of electric vehicles are different from those of gasoline-powered vehicles, it was also pointed out that Nunavik mechanics do not necessarily have the skills and tools needed to carry out the required maintenance

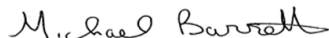
and repairs. Furthermore, in the event of recalls, it will be difficult and costly to return Nunavik electric vehicles to dealers since they will have to be transported by air or sea. In this regard, it is suggested that financial support be provided to train personnel and equip municipal garages.

Although the regulation under discussion concerns only light motorized vehicles, it was clearly understood that all-terrain vehicles and heavy vehicles could be the subject of a later regulation. In this regard, concerns were expressed in relation to the fact that heavy vehicles underpin essential services in Nunavik, such as drinking water supply and sewage disposal. In addition, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and boats are all necessary vehicles for the Inuit and Naskapi to access the regions where they practice their traditional and subsistence activities. As such, the Ministry is asked to specifically examine and document the performance of heavy and all-terrain electric vehicles in northern climates and their associated infrastructure.

### **Observations and recommendations of the KEAC**

Considering the issues and concerns raised above, and objective 1.4 of the Québec Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy to "deploy charging solutions adapted to Aboriginal communities or communities not connected to Hydro-Québec's main grid", the KEAC supports the measure identified in the Strategy to "implement pilot projects for stand-alone fast charging stations" in Nunavik, in order to gain a better understanding of the energy capacities of the infrastructures, as well as to take into account the region's difficult climatic conditions. As for the second measure identified in the Strategy to "jointly define their needs and establish a recharging action plan", the KEAC recommends that the means and solutions expressed by participants at the January 19, 2024 meeting be taken into consideration in the action plan for Nunavik, namely to carry out a lifecycle analysis of electric cars for Nunavik, introduce electric vehicles in the list of products subject to extended producer responsibility, create a subsidy program for Nunavik residents once village infrastructures can support the addition of electric vehicles, and support northern villages in training mechanics and equipping municipal garages.

Best regards,



Michael Barrett  
Vice-Chairperson, KEAC