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Comité consultatif de l'environnement Kativik
Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee

MINUTES OF THE 187TH MEETING OF THE KEAC (DRAFT)

DATES: February 23 and 24, 2026

LOCATION: Marie-Guyart Building, Complexe G, Quebec City

PRESENT:

Appointed by the Kativik Regional Government (KRG)

Michael Barrett, Chairperson
Minnie Grey, Vice-Chairperson
Theresa Chemaganish

Appointed by the Government of Canada

Claude Péloquin
Marie-Noëlle Fournier
Pierre-Yves Gagnon

Appointed by the Government of Québec

André-Anne Gagnon
Jasmin Bergeron
Paule Halley

Environmental Analyst

Nancy Dea

Legislation Analyst

Christine Lambert

ABSENT :

Benjamin Patenaude, Executive Secretary

GUESTS:

OBSERVERS:

Billy Shecanapish, Environment Officer, NNK
Lindsay Richardson, Project Manager NNK
Philippe Leblanc-Rochette, Environmental Coordinator, Makivvik

1. Call to order and adoption of the agenda

The 187th meeting of the Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee (KEAC) began at 9 h on February 23, 2026, at the Quebec City office of the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (environment, fight against climate change, wildlife and parks, MELCCFP). The 187th meeting took place in accordance with the agenda appearing in the appendix.

2. Administration

a) Budget

i. Expense report for the period November 2025-January 2026

The expense report for November 2025 and January 2026 was reviewed.

ii. Meeting with the MELCCFP's Advisor on Environmental Protection Programs in Northern Regions

An overview of a meeting with the MELCCFP's Advisor on Environmental Protection Programs in Northern Regions was presented. It was held on January 22, and its purpose was to present the Advisor's role and to identify strategies for enhancing communication with the MELCCFP and to assist the KEAC in fulfilling its mandate.

Action

- **The secretariat will continue its participation in these meetings when needed.**

iii. MELCCFP request to adapt the KEAC's annual planning

On November 18, 2025, the KEAC submitted its comments to the Provincial Administrator regarding his letter requesting that the KEAC modify its annual plan to better align with the Quebec government's budget cuts. On February 22, 2026, the Committee received a response from the provincial administrator in which he acknowledged the importance of the KEAC's role and indicated that the MELCCFP intends to maintain a balanced approach by combining virtual participation with targeted travel, and that this approach will be periodically reassessed to adapt to changes in the budgetary context and the KEAC's operational needs.

iv. 2026–2027 budget forecast

An update on the KEAC's budget forecast for 2026–2027 was given.

b) Members

The members continued the discussion concerning the development of a formal agreement with the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) for assuming the travel expenses for the members it appoints to the KEAC.

Furthermore, the federal government is scheduled to assume chairpersonship for 2026–2027.

- c) Active files since the 186th meeting, correspondence, and housekeeping

The members reviewed the table showing the status of KEAC files since the last meeting and the list of correspondence that will be published on the website.

- d) Secretariat

The Executive Secretary, Benjamin Patenaude announced that he has entered a part-time contract with the KEAC from April to September 2026, following which he will resign his position. The members warmly thank M. Patenaude for his years with the KEAC. They then discussed possible approaches to organizing the secretariat and hiring a replacement.

3. Environmental Assessment in Nunavik

- a) Update from the impact assessment working group

The Nunavik Impact Assessment Working Group held its third and final community workshop on February 12, 2026, in Quaqtaq with representatives from the communities of Kangiqsujuaq, Salluit, Quaqtaq, Ivujivik, and Kuujuaq. The workshop consisted of a series of presentations, discussions and activities aimed at encouraging awareness of the impact assessment processes in Nunavik as well as promoting community participation. The working group is scheduled to complete its report by spring 2026.

- b) 2026 Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment

The KEAC's analysts are scheduled to give a presentation at the 2026 Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment held on May 19 and 20, 2026 in Quebec City. An overview of the presentation and poster, which will address the challenges of impact assessment process multiplication in Nunavik, are presented.

- c) Bill 5: An Act to accelerate the granting of the authorizations required to carry out priority national-scale projects

A technical briefing session organized by the MELCCFP was held on January 22, 2026, regarding Bill 5, *An Act to accelerate the granting of the authorizations required to carry out priority national-scale Projects*. The KEAC was informed of this by the Institute for First Nation of Québec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute (FNQLSDI). On February 11, 2026, the KEAC submitted a statement to the Public Finance Committee in which it noted that the bill should specify that the social and environmental set forth in the JBNQA will apply to any project that may be designated under the provisions of Bill 5, and that the provisions of the JBNQA will apply to such projects.

- d) Draft Bill 11: An Act to amend various provisions for the main purpose of reducing regulatory and administrative burden

On February 5, 2026, the KEAC submitted a brief to the Economy and Labor Committee of the Quebec National Assembly regarding Bill 11, *An Act to amend various provisions for the main purpose of reducing regulatory and administrative burden*. The brief emphasizes that changes aimed at reducing the administrative burden should not result in a diminished ability to detect cases of noncompliance in Nunavik.

It also highlights that abandoned camps, infrastructure, and equipment on the territory constitute a significant issue and that, every year, the KRG and land users discover new abandoned sites. The KEAC also emphasized that annual reports remain necessary to ensure adequate monitoring of mineral exploration activities in Nunavik and that these reports should be submitted to the KRG and to the communities affected by these activities.

e) Conference, Navigating Change: Strengthening Impact Assessment Through Collaboration

On February 4 and 5, the KEAC analysts took part in the conference “Navigating Change: Strengthening Impact Assessment Through Collaboration”, organized in Wendake by the FNQLSDI. The conference consisted of presentations from Indigenous nations and communities that received funding through the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada’s (IAAC) Indigenous Capacity Building Program as well as a series of discussion sessions and a presentation from the IAAC on their recent revisions to the consultation process timeline.

4. Monitoring of Authorized Projects in Nunavik, MELCCFP

On January 7, 2026, the KEAC contacted the MELCCFP’s Environmental Control team to enquire about how they conduct their monitoring measures in the context of different project conditions as well as implementing mine site restoration plans. They confirm that ensuring that all conditions in an authorization are met is the responsibility of the MELCCFP. On the other hand, site restoration plans fall under the responsibility of the ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts (MRNF).

Furthermore, the KEAC attended a meeting with representatives MELCCFP’s Environmental Control team and the KRG on February 19 during which the results of the 2025 inspections of the abandoned permanent camps were presented. The findings highlight the numerous permanent outfitter camps in various states of disrepair or abandonment, including several where varying amounts of hazardous materials have been identified. Meeting participants discussed how to identify the parties responsible for removing the waste and hazardous materials present at these sites. The MELCCFP representatives believed the conditions stipulated under Article 66 Environment Quality Act could apply to these sites in the sense that the responsibility for ensuring the proper handling and containment of residual and hazardous materials at these sites falls under the responsibility of the lease holder.

Discussion then focused on management of potential contaminants at abandoned camp sites, responsibilities and obligations of lease holders as well as issues related to lease renewals.

5. Residual materials management

a) Open-air burning

An overview of a letter the KEAC sent on December 17, 2025, to the Provincial Administrator and Deputy Minister and National Director of Public health was given. It addressed the follow-up on the implementation of the Bureau d’audiences Publiques’ recommendations on open-air burning of residual materials in Nunavik as presented in their consultation report on the treatment and management of final waste. In its letter, the Committee recommends the creation of a joint working committee tasked with examining the exposure of the Nunavik population to contaminants emitted by open-air burning, contributing to the characterization of the effects of this practice on health and the environment, and engaging in a coordinated discussion of common

issues related to open-air burning in northern regions.

b) Proposed modifications to the Regulation regarding selective collection, MELCCFP

An information session on MELCCFP's proposed amendments to the *Regulation on a System for the Selective Collection of Certain Waste Materials* was held on January 6, 2026. In its current version, article 12 of the Regulation provides for a collection service in at least one northern village as of January 2025 and in all northern villages no later than January 1, 2027. To date, no system is operational in Nunavik, which means that the timeline set out in the Regulation's appendix has not been met. During the January 6 discussion, participants were informed that, due to a significant increase in system costs and operational difficulties observed in recent months, Éco Entreprise Québec (ÉEQ) and the producers submitted a request for a regulatory amendment to the MELCCFP that would postpone the effective date for implementing the regulations in the northern villages.

On January 20, the KEAC received a copy of a letter from the KRG proposing a new timeline to the MELCCFP for the implementation of the Regulation in Nunavik. The KRG also recommended that compliance with the deadlines be assessed on an annual basis as part of the mandate entrusted to the monitoring committee that ÉEQ is required to establish under Section 66 of the Regulation, and emphasized that the lack of necessary funding was a major obstacle to the implementation of selective collection projects.

c) Federal government's Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations, ECCC

A summary of the amendments that Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) intends to make to the Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations is presented. These amendments were developed in response to the Federal Court of Appeal's decision regarding the validity and constitutionality of the Regulations and include conditions relating to the manufacture and export of single-use plastic products. The KEAC did not provide specific comments on the proposed amendments, as the region does not have a plastics manufacturing industry, but took the opportunity to remind ECCC of the waste management challenges in the North and the ongoing lack of access to federal funding.

6. Land-use

a) Issues related to land lease allocation in Nunavik

An overview of the KEAC's recommendations in its letter dated December 19, 2025 concerning the allocation of land leases in Nunavik was given. These include a request to develop legislation under which the Minister may act to correct violations of lease conditions, to intervene in situations where spills and contamination may occur, as well as the provision of financial guarantees to remediate camp sites as a condition of the lease applications.

In addition, on February 19, KEAC analysts met with representatives from the KRG and the Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Northern Quebec Regional Environmental Enforcement Department to better understand how the Environment Quality Act governs land leases and which sections apply in cases where camps are abandoned and hazardous waste is present. The meeting highlighted gaps in the application of the Environment Quality Act in such cases and helped define an intervention strategy for priority sites.

b) MAMH's National architecture and land use planning policy

On January 20, 2026, the KEAC received a letter from the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation (MAMH) concerning their proposed amendments and implementation plan under the National architecture and land use planning policy (PNAAT). It was explained that Action 9.1 under the implementation plan seeks to include First Nations and Inuit in land use planning discussions.

Furthermore, a meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2026, to follow up on the implementation of this action.

7. Mining activity

a) Abandoned mining sites in Naskapi territory of interest

Following the discussion at the 186th meeting between the representatives of the MRNF and NNK regarding the status of abandoned mine sites in the Schefferville area, and a draft letter to bring the highlights of this discussion to the MRNF's attention was presented.

An overview of a meeting held on January 26, 2026, between the MRNF and NNK to address these matters was also given.

b) Update on Strange Lake Project

An update on the current state of the Strange Lake Rare Earth project was given. Members from Indigenous communities expressed their opposition to the project following the approval of a winter airstrip on Lake Brisson. The proponent is currently trying to mediate the situation. Furthermore the proponent met with representatives of the community of Kangiqsualujjuaq on January 19, 2026 to present their activities as well as the proposed expansion of their camp to facilitate the bulk sampling phase of the project as well as other related infrastructure developments and study initiatives.

8. Water management

a) Drinking water

On December 19, 2025, the KEAC sent a letter to the Associate Secretary General for First Nations and Inuit Relations, the Assistant Deputy Minister for Prevention and Public Health and National Director of Public Health, and the Provincial Administrator. The letter recommends the creation of a working group composed of all stakeholders involved in addressing drinking water issues in Nunavik to identify the main barriers to access to drinking water in communities and, above all, to identify sustainable solutions.

In addition, the KEAC has been invited to present its report on drinking water governance at the Northern Quebec Regional Administrative Conference on March 12, 2026.

9. Biodiversity and Conservation

a) Iluliliq national park project

On December 11, 2025, the KEAC sent a letter to the provincial and federal administrators of Section 23 of the JBNQA to inform them of the issues related to the boundaries of the proposed Iluliliq National Park and to encourage them to find a solution that would allow the park project to move forward while ensuring the protection of fragile environments. In his response, dated December 30, 2025, the federal administrator explained that the KEAC's letter had been forwarded to the responsible officials at Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada and at ECCC. To date, no response has been received from the provincial administrator.

b) MELCCFP's proposed mechanism for the creation of Northern Conservation Areas

The MELCCFP has launched a pilot project in the Naskapi Territory of Interest, which will test the mechanism and could eventually lead to the creation of a northern conservation territory. The NNK held a consultation on the pilot project on February 10 and 11, 2026.

As part of this process, the KRG proposed a series of adjustments to the pilot project and provided the MELCCFP with various data on the natural and physical environments of the territory under study, as well as on its land tenure system. The MELCCFP conducted a survey of the study area in the summer of 2025 to validate and supplement the KRG's data. A preliminary report outlining the recommendations and objectives related to the creation of this northern conservation area was prepared and presented to an interministerial committee.

Action

- **Send the necessary invitations to arrange a presentation on the pilot project at a future meeting.**

10. Miscellaneous

- a) ECCC Conference on the environmental and social protection regime and the hunting, fishing and trapping regime under Sections 22, 23 and 24 of the JBNQA (March 25 in Québec City)

An update on the organization and scheduling of ECCC's conference on the environmental and social protection regime as well as the hunting, fishing and trapping regime under Sections 22, 23 and 24 of the JBNQA was presented. It is scheduled for March 25 2026 in Quebec City and the KEAC was invited to give a presentation.

- b) Green corner article

The Green Corner article for the 139th edition of Tarralik would address the workshops held by the Nunavik Impact Assessment Working Group.

- c) Integrated energy resource management plan, MÉIÉ

The Ministry of Economy, Innovation, and Energy held a consultation on its integrated energy resources management plan earlier this year. This consultation follows the "Vision Energy" consultation that took place in the spring of 2025. It should be noted that the KEAC and other regional entities were not informed of either of these consultations and that, as a result, the committee was unable to provide comments on the proposed

plan. The Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador sent a letter to the Minister of Economy, Innovation, and Energy to highlight several issues related to the consultation on the integrated energy resources management plan.

d) DFO engagement sessions: Amending the Authorizations Regulations and Approaches to Early Engagement

An overview of an engagement session on Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO) Amending the Authorizations Regulations and Approaches to Early Engagement was given. It was held on January 13 and its objective is to gather feedback on the DFO's proposed amendments to the authorization of projects under the Fisheries Act and species at Risk Act. The information sessions consisted of a presentation of the proposed amendments and engagement session wherein participant feedback was given.

The KEAC had no specific comments regarding the proposed regulatory amendments. However, it took the opportunity to express its appreciation for the Department's efforts to strengthen early engagement with the Inuit and the Naskapi Nation in order to improve decision-making processes and foster better relations with the federal government and project proponents. The KEAC also invited the Ministry to communicate directly with the organizations and communities regularly consulted for projects requiring authorization under federal laws and regulations, notably the Fisheries Act, including the Makivik Corporation, the ARK, the 14 Inuit communities of Nunavik, and the NNK.

e) Regulatory Review of the Environmental Emergency Regulations, 2019 (ECCC)

An information session was held on January 15, 2026, regarding ECCC's review of 2019 the Environmental Emergencies Regulations. The purpose of this session was to examine the effectiveness of the Regulations, which apply to facilities that store certain chemicals. ECCC indicated that, in the Nunavik region, 17 facilities owned by 5 companies reported possessing or managing and controlling the chemicals covered by the Regulations. Following the session, the KEAC sent an email to ECCC suggesting that it contact certain facilities in Nunavik that might be affected by these changes, as well as the ARK.

f) 2026–2029 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, ECCC

On January 19, 2026, Makivik informed the KEAC of a consultation on the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. This strategy is extremely broad and encompasses objectives related to building an inclusive and resilient society, fostering clean growth, and protecting the environment and well-being. The KEAC will not be submitting comments on this document.

11. Next meetings

The 188th meeting is scheduled for May 25 and 26, 2026 in Quebec City. The KEAC also intends to meet with the Federal and Provincial Administrators on these dates. The 189th meeting is scheduled for September 21 to 25, 2026 in Quaqtaq.

12. Communications

- a) 2001–2026: 25-year retrospective

The latest version of the KEAC's 25-year retrospective for 2001–2026 was presented

- b) 2025–2026 Annual Report

A draft of the 2025–2026 Annual report was presented and discussed.

Benjamin Patenaude
Executive secretary
Drafted in May 2026
Adopted on

Appendix—Agenda of the 187th meeting

1. Call to order and adoption of the agenda

2. Administration

a) Budget

- i. Follow up on items addressed at the 186th meeting
- ii. Expense report for the period November 2025-January 2026
- iii. Meeting with the MELCCFP's Advisor on Environmental Protection Programs in Northern Regions
- iv. MELCCFP request to adapt the KEAC's annual planning
- v. 2026–2027 budget forecast

b) Members

c) Active files since the 186th meeting, correspondence, and housekeeping

d) Secretariat

3. Environmental Assessment in Nunavik

- a) Update from the impact assessment working group 2026 Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment
- b) Collaboration between northern committees
- c) Bill 5: An Act to accelerate the granting of the authorizations required to carry out priority national-scale projects
- d) Draft Bill 11: An Act to amend various provisions for the main purpose of reducing regulatory and administrative burden
- e) Conference, Navigating Change: Strengthening Impact Assessment Through Collaboration

4. Monitoring of authorized projects in Nunavik, MELCCFP

5. Residual materials management

- a) Open-air burning
- b) Proposed modifications to the Regulation regarding selective collection
- c) Federal government's Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations

6. Land-use

- a) Issues related to land lease allocation in Nunavik
- b) MAMH's National architecture and land use planning policy

7. Mining activity

- a) Abandoned mining sites in Naskapi territory of interest
- b) Update on Strange Lake Project

8. Water management

- a) Drinking water

9. Biodiversity and Conservation

- a) Iluiliq national park project
- b) MELCCFP's proposed mechanism for the creation of Northern Conservation Areas

10. Miscellaneous

- a) ECCC Conference on the environmental and social protection regime and the hunting, fishing and trapping regime under Sections 22, 23 and 24 of the JBNQA (March 25 in Québec City)
- b) Green corner article
- c) Integrated energy resource management plan, MÉIE
- d) DFO engagement sessions : Amending the Authorizations Regulations and Approaches to Early Engagement
- e) Regulatory Review of the Environmental Emergency Regulations, 2019 (ECCC)
- f) Consultations sur la Stratégie fédérale de développement durable

11. Next meetings

12. Communications

- a) 2001–2026: 25-year retrospective 2025–2026 Annual Report