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Comité consultatif de l'environnement Kativik
Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee

MINUTES OF THE 188TH MEETING OF THE KEAC (ADOPTED)

DATES: May 25 and 26, 2026

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

PRESENT:

Appointed by the Kativik Regional Government (KRG)

Michael Barrett

Minnie Grey

Theresa Chemaganish (by video conference on May 25)

Appointed by the Government of Canada

Claude Péroquin (by video conference on May 25 and 26)

Pierre-Yves Gagnon, Chairperson

Appointed by the Government of Québec

André-Anne Gagnon

Jasmin Bergeron, Vice-Chairperson

Paule Halley

Executive secretary

Benjamin Patenaude

Environmental Analyst

Nancy Dea

Legislation Analyst

Christine Lambert

ABSENT:

Marie-Noëlle Fournier, member appointed by the federal government

GUESTS

Veronique St. Onge, K R G Consultant

Frédéric Guay, Provincial Administrator, Section 23 of the JBNQA.

Vanessa Chalifour, Advisor on Environmental Protection Programs in Northern Regions, MELCCFP

Terence Hubbard, Federal Administrator, Section 23, JBNQA

Elisabeth Gill, Québec Regional Director, IAAC
Mélissa Gagnon, Deputy Executive Director of Environmental and Strategic Assessment, MELCCFP

OBSERVERS:

Billy Shecanapish, Environment Officer, NNK
Lindsay Richardson, Project Manager NNK
Philippe Leblanc-Rochette, Environmental Coordinator, Makivvik
Louis-Joseph Drapeau, Environmental Analyst, JBACE

1. Call to order and adoption of the agenda

The 188th meeting of the Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee (KEAC) began at 9 a.m. on May 25, 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) and took place in accordance with the agenda appearing in the appendix.

2. Adoption of minutes from the 185th, 186th and 187th meetings

The adoption of the minutes from the 185th and 186th meetings was deferred to a later date.

3. Administration

a) Budget

- i. Expense report for the period February-April 2026

The expense report for February to April 2026 was reviewed.

- ii. 2026–2027 operating budget

Funding for the 2026–2027 operating budget was received on May 7, 2026, and the members thanked the Administrators for its prompt processing. Furthermore, the Secretariat was informed that the MELCCFP intends to update the funding agreement between the MELCCFP and the KEAC regarding the maintenance and operation of its secretariat, dating from 2005 and modify some of its application criteria for the upcoming fiscal year. Further information will be provided when available.

b) Members

At present, the KRG has not refunded the KEAC for assuming the travel costs of their appointed members for the Committee's 184th meeting. The matter will be brought to the attention of the KRG's Director General.

Action item

- **Send a letter to the KRG's Director General to bring this matter to his attention and request that an agreement for the reimbursement of KRG-appointed members' travel be developed.**

c) Secretariat

The recruitment of the executive secretary's replacement was discussed. The estimated budget for restructuring the employee positions was also presented.

d) Communications

i. 2001–2026: 25-year retrospective

The KEAC's 2001–2026, 25-year retrospective was adopted on May 12, 2026, and distributed to different partner organizations on May 22, 2026.

i. 2025–2026 Annual Report

The 2025–2026 Annual Report was adopted. It will be sent to the Administrators before June 30, 2026, following which it will be published on the KEAC website and distributed to the Committee's regional and governmental partners.

e) Active files since the 187th 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 would be published on the website.

4. Residual material management

a) Presentation: Optimizing Packaging of Products in Nunavik, K R G

Veronique St. Onge, K R G consultant, gave a presentation on the results of a study on optimizing the packaging of products shipped to Nunavik. It was realized in accordance with Measure 14 of the KRG's 2021–2027 Nunavik Residual Materials Management Plan which proposes measures aimed at reducing the amount of packaging for products being shipped to Nunavik. The study was developed with the goal of assessing the amount and types of packaging waste in Nunavik's landfills.

The results indicate that the main issue in determining the type and quantities of packing used is cost in relation to volume and weight. Further discussions with various suppliers and regional organizations are planned after which recommendations as well as a strategy for guiding the future direction of the study will be developed.

b) Open-air burning

The letter received on February 10, 2026, from the Assistant Deputy Minister for Expertise and Policy in the Land and Sustainable Development Sector (MELCCFP) and the National Director of Public Health and Assistant Deputy Minister for Prevention and Public Health (MSSS) is discussed. It was a response to the KEAC's letter dated December 17, 2025, concerning the formation of a working group to follow up on the implementation of the Bureau d'audiences publiques' (BAPE) recommendations regarding the practice of open-air burning of residual materials at northern landfill sites. The respondents recognize the KEAC's concerns and recommend that representatives of the MSSS and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services attend the next meeting of the Nunavik Residual Materials Management working group where this matter could be explored further.

The KEAC Secretariat then contacted representatives from KRG and the MELCCFP to organize the next working group meeting, which is now scheduled for June 10, 2026.

c) Proposed modifications to the Regulation regarding selective collection

The MELCCFP published a ministerial administrative position on March 20, 2026, concerning the deferral for implementing certain obligations under the Regulation regarding selective collection in Nunavik communities. This action stems from a discussion with KRG and the MELCCFP following which KRG sent observations in a letter dated January 20, 2026. At present, corresponding amendments to the Regulation have not yet been published.

5. Meeting with the Provincial Administrator

The members met with Frédéric Guay, Provincial Administrator of Section 23 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) and Vanessa Chalifour the Advisor on Environmental Protection Programs in Northern Regions with the MELCCFP.

As Mr. Guay has been newly appointed as Provincial Administrator, the meeting opened with a presentation on the KEAC that addressed the particularities of the Nunavik region as well as the Committee's mandate, recent achievements and files reviewed in 2025–2026. This was followed by a discussion centred on enhancing communication and consultation with the KEAC, the matter of in-person attendance of Quebec Government appointees at annual meetings, collaboration with the JBNQA northern committees, the KEAC's 25-year retrospective, the request to form a steering committee to guide the Mid-Canada Line site clean-up project, the activities of the Nunavik Impact Assessment Working Group, as well as issues related to abandoned mining sites and the creation of the Ilulituk park project. Finally, the members and Administrator discussed the position of the Executive Secretary and the review of the current funding agreement between the KEAC and MELCCFP.

6. Meeting with the Federal Administrator

The members met with Terence Hubbard, the Federal Administrator of Section 23 of the JBNQA and Elisabeth Gill, a Québec Regional Director with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC). The meeting opened with a presentation on the KEAC's meetings and files reviewed in 2025–2026. This was followed by a discussion centred on enhancing communication and consultation with the KEAC, the application of the federal impact assessment process in Nunavik, the results of the Nunavik Impact Assessment Working group's community workshops, and the Committee's participation in the engagement session on the Regulatory Review of the Environmental Emergency Regulations. A demonstration of the interactive map on the KEAC's website was also given. The KEAC also received updates regarding the remediation of Killiniq, the Mid-Canada Line site clean-up project as well as the federal government's streamlined review process under Bill C-5.

7. Water management

a) Drinking water

An update on the KEAC's work regarding drinking water management in Nunavik is presented. A presentation on this topic was recently given to representatives from several Quebec government

ministries. The KEAC is still awaiting a response to the letter sent on December 19, 2025, to the Associate Secretary General for Relations with First Nations and Inuit and to the Assistant Deputy Minister and National Director of Public Health regarding the creation of a working group on drinking water in Nunavik.

Action item

- Follow-up on the KEAC's letter dated December 19, 2025.

- b) A modernized regulatory framework for water-related areas, including flood-prone areas, and for the regulation of flood protection structures

An overview of the KEAC's recommendations on the modernized regulatory framework for water-related areas, including flood-prone areas, and for the regulation of flood protection structures (the Permanent Regime) was given. In its current form, the Regime is tailored to the context of southern Quebec, specifically in relation to the delineation of shorelines and flood-prone areas. Despite this, the KRG and Northern Villages are obliged to comply with these regulations. The KEAC recently contacted the MELCCFP to address this matter and a response is pending.

8. Mining activity

- a) Update on Strange Lake Project

On April 7, 2026, the KEAC was contacted by a Senior Consultation Analyst of the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC). Their email noted the importance of harmonizing the consultation process for the Strange Lake Rare Earth mining project and expressed a desire to collaborate with the Kativik Environmental Quality Commission (KEQC) and hold joint consultations in the communities of Kangiqsualujuaq and Kawawachikamach. The IAAC also expressed an interest in collaborating with the KEAC to identify strategies for harmonizing the consultations under the different review processes.

An update from the Qiniqtiq Landholding Corporation of Kangiqsualujuaq on the production of the proponent's impact study and the organization of community consultations was given.

- b) Draft Regulation Amending the Mining Regulation

The Draft Regulation Amending the Mining Regulation was published in the Gazette Officielle on March 4, 2026. Following which the KEAC submitted its feedback on April 16, 2026. Of note, the KEAC reiterated its position regarding the importance of consulting Indigenous communities and regional organizations, the treatment of economic impacts for Nunavik communities, short deadlines for providing feedback on potential exploration work, and accessibility of project information. The Committee also recommended that separate permit application requirements and reviews for mining projects in Nunavik be developed and that regional stakeholders be consulted directly by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts (MRNF).

- c) Québec Plan for the Development of Critical and Strategic Minerals

An overview of the MRNF's information session held on April 21, 2026, regarding the Québec Plan for the Development of Critical and Strategic Minerals was given. The Plan contains a series of four orientations: improving the business environment and accelerating the authorization of projects, developing the value

system for critical and strategic minerals as well as strategic logistic infrastructure corridors and fostering partner engagement.

9. Impact Assessment

a) Review of Schedules in Section 23 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement

On May 29, 2025, the KEAC sent a letter to Makivvik concerning the Committee's observations with regards to the environmental and social impact assessment and review procedures in Nunavik. These include a description of past initiatives to update Section 23 of the JBNQA, addressing the issues surrounding community engagement, and the importance of strategic environmental assessments. A response was received from Makivvik on April 9, 2026, in which they recognized the disparities between the regime under Section 23 and other assessment processes. They propose to establish a technical working group composed of Makivvik, K R G and KEAC representatives tasked with developing recommendations for the modernization of the Schedules of Section 23, consultation and community engagement standards, and incorporating cumulative impacts in regional assessments. However, they explain that, at Makivvik's request, the scope of the working group's mandate should exclude the renegotiation of Section 23.

Action item

- **Contact Makivvik to confirm the KEAC's interest in serving on the technical working group and initiating their first meeting.**

b) Update from the impact assessment working group

The Nunavik Impact Assessment Working Group is scheduled to complete its draft report on the community workshops by June 30, 2026. Furthermore, the IAAC has approved an extension of the funding currently awarded to Makivvik to allow the working group to pursue its work.

c) KRG training session regarding impact assessment

At the request of KRG, the KEAC and KEQC held a training session for employees and executives on March 19–20, 2026, to familiarize them with the impact assessment processes applicable in Nunavik and related legislation, as well as the role and mandates of the different review bodies.

During the meeting with the KRG executives, it was requested that representatives of the KEAC, KEQC and COFEX-North give a presentation on their role and mandate at a future meeting of the regional council. The members accept their invitation.

d) 2026 Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment

An overview of the 2026 Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment was given. It was held from May 19 to 22, 2026 in Quebec City. The KEAC's analysts took part in a discussion panel concerning the streamlining of impact assessment processes, and presented a poster on the multiplication of processes in Nunavik. Other presentations and discussions of note by the analysts addressed the shortcomings in the assessment and decision-making processes, the role of strategic

planning, monitoring and mitigation measures, streamlining processes versus time required for meaningful community participation, as well as Indigenous-led environmental assessments.

e) Presentation: Federal Government's re-engineered assessment model, IAAC

Elisabeth Gill, Québec Regional Director of the IAAC, gave a presentation on the Federal Government's re-engineered impact assessment model. The new model aims to enhance flexibility when adjusting project descriptions or activities while supporting proponents and Indigenous communities through information tools and funding programs. The development of the new process is part of the federal government's ongoing efforts to identify possible efficiencies, and it is predicted to significantly increase the speed of project authorization. The IAAC still intends on consulting Indigenous people early in the planning phase.

The presentation concluded with a discussion focused on Indigenous involvement in the consultation process and potential implications of the federal government's modifications.

Action Item

- **Send a letter to the Federal Administrator to express the members' concerns with the federal government's new assessment model.**

f) Presentation: Modernization of Southern Québec's Procedure for the Assessment and Review of Environmental Impacts, MELCCFP

Mélissa Gagnon, the Deputy Executive Director of Environmental and Strategic Assessment, and Vanessa Chalifour, the Advisor on Environmental Protection Programs in Northern Regions, with the MELCCFP gave a presentation on the Québec's recent efforts to modernize the environmental and social impact procedure for Southern Quebec. This overhaul aims at maximizing benefits and improving process efficiency by identifying key issues as well as providing a clear series of requirements for proponents with regards to the contents of their impact statements early in the review process.

Under the new procedure, the role of the BAPE and its powers are enhanced. For example, they can now organize information sessions earlier in the process and will now have an advisory role in matters related to consultation and mediation. The MELCCFP has also prepared a series of reference documents for the implementation of the new procedure and are available on their website. The proposed modification only applies to southern Quebec, as any changes to impact assessment procedures in Nunavik must be tailored to the existing regimes and governance structures under the JBNQA.

10. Biodiversity and Conservation

a) Iluliliq national park project

An overview of the Provincial Administrator's letter dated May 21, 2026, was given. It was in response to the December 15, 2025 letter voicing the KEAC's concerns regarding the delay in the creation of the Iluliliq national park project due to the delineation of its boundaries. The Provincial Administrator recognizes the importance of the project's conservation objectives but it was noted that the letter did not address KEAC's specific concerns.

Action item

- **Contact KRG to obtain their feedback on the Provincial Administrator's letter.**
- **Contact the MELCCFP to follow up on the progress of this file.**

11. Land-use

a) Issues related to land lease allocation in Nunavik

The KEAC received a response from the MRNF on March 12, 2026, to its letter dated December 19, 2025, concerning issues related to land lease allocation in Nunavik. In their response the MRNF confirms receipt of the KEAC's feedback and explains that should regulatory changes be made, the Committee's feedback would be considered. Given the MRNF's response and its brevity, the members discussed other possible avenues to address their concerns on this matter.

Action item

- **Invite a representative of the MRNF to the 190th meeting to discuss the KEAC's concerns with this file.**

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

On May 14, 2026, the KEAC sent a letter to the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation's (MAMH) concerning the current consultation on Action 9.1 of the National architecture and land use planning policy. This action focuses of the policy's Implementation Plan which proposes to create a series of discussion groups with First Nations and Inuit. The KEAC letter reiterated that the priority in Nunavik is to update the *Act respecting the Northern Villages and the Kativik Regional Government*, and that any national working group created to discuss issues of land use planning with Indigenous nations should include a separate group for Nunavik, as the land use structure and governance in the region are influenced by the JBNQA,

12. 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

An overview of ECCC's conference on the environmental and social protection regime and the hunting, fishing and trapping regime under Sections 22, 23 and 24 of the JBNQA was given. It was held on March 25, 2026, in Quebec City and served as an opportunity to familiarize Federal Government employees with the origins of the JBNQA as well as the regimes and northern committees created under Sections 22, 23, and 24. The KEAC analysts attended the conference to present the specificities of Section 23 of the JBNQA.

b) Green corner article—*Tarralik*

An update on the publication of the Green Corner Articles in issues 137, 138 and 139 of *Tarralik* was given.

13. Next meetings

The 189th meeting is scheduled for September 22–24, 2026 in Quaqtaq, the 190th meeting is scheduled for December 1 and 2, 2026 in Quebec City and the 191st meeting is scheduled for February 22 to 24, 2027 in Kuujuaq.

Benjamin Patenaude
Executive secretary
September 24, 2026

Appendix—Agenda of the 188th meeting

1. Call to order and adoption of the agenda

2. Adoption of minutes from the 185th, 186th and 187th meetings

3. Administration

Budget i. Follow up on items addressed at the 187th meeting

- a) Expense report for the period February-April 2026
- b) 2026–2027 operating budget
- c) Members
- d) Secretariat
- e) Communications
 - i. 2001–2026: 25-year retrospective 2025–2026 Annual Report
- f) Active files since the 187th meeting, correspondence, and housekeeping

4. Residual material management

- a) Presentation: Optimizing Packaging of Products in Nunavik, K R G
- b) Open-air burning
- c) Proposed modifications to the Regulation regarding selective collection

5. Meeting with the Provincial Administrator

6. Meeting with the Federal Administrator

7. Water management

- a) Drinking water
- b) A modernized regulatory framework for water-related areas, including flood-prone areas, and for the regulation of flood protection structures

8. Mining activity

- a) Update on Strange Lake Project
- b) Draft Regulation Amending the Mining Regulation
- c) Québec Plan for the Development of Critical and Strategic Minerals

9. Impact Assessment

- a) Review of Schedules in Section 23 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement
- b) Update from the impact assessment working group
- c) KRG training regarding impact assessment 2026 Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment
- d) Presentation: Federal Government's re-engineered assessment model, IAAC

- e) Presentation: Modernization of Southern Québec's Procedure for the Assessment and Review of Environmental Impacts, MELCCFP

10. Biodiversity and Conservation

- a) Iluliliq national park project

11. Land-use

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

12. 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 Green corner article—*Tarralik*

13. Next meetings