



MINUTES OF THE 230th MEETING OF THE JAMES BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE

November 14, 2023

LOCATION

Hybrid (Videoconference and Mistissini)

PRESENT

Marc Dunn, Cree Nation Government
 (remote)

Graeme Morin, Cree Nation Government
 (remote)

Tina Petawabano, Cree Nation Government

Melissa Saganash, Cree Nation Government
 (remote)

Brigitte Goulet, Québec

Mélanie Savoie, Québec

Alexandre-Guy Côté, Canada

Jean-Olivier Roy, Canada

Michèle Leduc-Lapierre, Executive Director

Mathilde Butler, Environmental Analyst

Eva Wolf, Secretariat Officer (remote)

ABSENT

Manon Cyr, Québec

Madeleine Green, Canada

OBSERVERS

Jean-Philippe Marcoux, Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs

Georgina Braoudakis, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Benoit Péloquin, Environment and Climate Change Canada

WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chairperson welcomes all members.

On a motion supported by Mélanie Savoie, seconded by Alexandre-Guy Côté, the agenda (see appendix 1) is adopted with additions.

ADMINISTRATION

Adoption of the minutes of the 229th meeting

Minutes of the 229th meeting will be adopted at the next meeting.

Follow-up on actions from the 229th meeting

The Executive Director follows-up on the actions from the 229th meeting.

She informs the members that discussions are ongoing regarding the possibility of presenting a funding request for multiple years. This could require to have a formal agreement between the Government of Quebec and the JBACE. She will inform members on any advancement in this file.

231st meeting (March 2024)

In preparation for the meeting with the Federal Administrator, the Executive Director suggest to hold a preparatory meeting with all the members early March. She will send a Doodle to members.

The Executive Director then suggests that two workshops be held in conjunction with the meeting. The first would be on waste materials, as previously discussed. The proposal for the second workshop follows the discussion that

had taken place the previous day, between members, the Deputy Chief and the Cree Administrator. It would deal with mining, particularly critical and strategic minerals such as lithium.

The members are in favour of holding both workshops on March 12, 2024. The JBACE meeting would then be held on the following day, on March 13, 2024.

Date and location of subsequent meetings

The members agree on the date and location of upcoming meetings in 2024-2025:

- Meeting 232 will be held during the week of June 10, 2024, on the Territory. The meeting could be held in Wemindji or Chisasibi.
- Meeting 233 will be held in Gatineau during the week of September 9, 2024.
- Meeting 234 will be held in Québec City during the week of Novembre 11, 2024.
- Meeting 235 will be held in Montréal during the week of March 17, 2025.

Subcommittees update

The members agree that there are no changes to make to the list of subcommittees. An update will be made when the new members will have been appointed.

Hiring of a part-time Analyst

The Executive Director informs the members that the JBACE received two unsolicited applications for the position of part-time junior Analyst. The analysis of expenses related to hiring a part-time analyst was discussed and approved last year, and the associated costs are therefore included in the current year's budget. The budget forecasts for next year may also take this into account.

Following a discussion, the members agree to continue with the hiring process. The Executive Director will share the candidates' resumé and cover letters with the members.

Presentation of the 2023-2024 revised budget and the 2024-2025 budget

The Executive Director reminds members that the information is available on the cloud and then presents the 2023-2024 revised budget and the 2024-2025 budget

The Executive Director reviews the 2023-2024 budget items and explains where there will be important differences. She explains that there would be a budget surplus for the current year due to the departure of the previous senior Analyst and the position that had remained vacant pending the hiring of the senior Analyst, as well as the part-time junior Analyst position that was still vacant

Afterwards, she presents the 2024-2025 budget.

On a motion by Graeme Morin, seconded by Mélanie Savoie, the 2023-2024 revised budget and the 2024-2025 budget are adopted.

Files

Public Land Use Plans (PLUP or PATP in French)

As there are several new members and observers, the Executive Director begins by giving a brief overview of the file and explains what a PLUP is and what it is used for. She recalls that the JBACE had received the documents in July and that the subcommittee had met several times to work on this file. It was agreed upon that the JBACE's comments would not be on specific allocations, but rather on the involvement of the different entities in the process, on the consideration of the specific characteristics of the Territory and Cree rights, as well as on grammatical clarifications.

A first draft of the comments will be sent to the subcommittee in the days following the meeting. Important dates are:

- December 8, 2023: comments sent to the members for their review;
- January 5, 2024: deadline for members to send their comments to the Executive Director;
- January 17, 2024: deadline to send comments to the MRNF.

Mining activities

The Executive Director presents a summary of the latest actions taken on this issue. She recalls that the JBACE had sent comments on the draft regulations for impact exploration activities and had taken part in a meeting with the MRNF on November 3, 2023 as part of the work on the harmonious development of mining activities. She points out that it remains possible to submit comments in response to the proposals presented by the MRNF, but that this must be done before November 24, 2023.

There is little time to consider proposals, but it remains feasible to use material from past comments. As this is an important issue and an opportunity to express an opinion before a bill is drafted, the members discuss the possibility of preparing and submitting comments. One member suggests drafting a more general letter reminding everyone that mining issues are important. We could highlight our dissatisfaction with the tight deadline while reiterating our interest in being called upon to comment on the bill.

Members agree that the letter should be sent. The secretariat will send a draft letter to the subcommittee by November 17, 2023, and members on the subcommittee will have until the following Wednesday to revise it. This will allow for the letter to be sent out on time.

Climate change

The Analyst summarizes the climate change file, beginning with the paragraphs currently being reviewed by the subcommittee, which will be used to improve our letters and analyses where appropriate. These underline the importance of taking into account the impacts of climate change, both in government initiatives and in relation to consultation practices. She also highlights two long-term initiatives put forward by the subcommittee, namely an inventory of active funding programs on the Territory, and an exercise to identify legislative gaps in the area of climate change. She mentions that she had met with the CNG's climate change team. Follow-up meetings will continue with the federal and provincial governments over the coming months.

A member then presents the CNG's plan for a regional forum to be held in the spring of 2024. A community has been identified to hold the event, but there are still some details to be worked out. He mentions that the forum would be a friendly, action-oriented event. The JBACE has been identified as a potential partner for organizing the forum, but our precise role has yet to be confirmed. Logistics should be covered by the CNG. Decisions have yet to be taken, and the member will act as a bridge between the CNG and the JBACE on the way forward

PAFIT

The Executive Director provides an update. She points out that questions had been raised about the JBACE's role in reviewing the PAFITs. She prepared a document setting out the factors to be taken into consideration in assessing the JBACE's involvement in the matter. The subcommittee was unable to meet to discuss this document before this current meeting, but it should do so in the coming weeks. The members of the subcommittee will prepare a recommendation to be presented to members during the meeting that will be held in March, 2024. For the time being, she mentions that budget planning includes the review, as carried out in previous years, and adjustments will be made if necessary.

Caribou

The Executive Director asks if anyone was aware of any developments in this matter. One member says that discussions are currently held at a very high level. Quebec's caribou strategy is currently being reviewed and it is expected that it will be sent out for consultation by the end of December 2023. He adds that work has been advancing in parallel with certain communities, on an emergency federal decree.

Cumulative effects

The Analyst begins by recalling the four action strands and the adoption of the Data Strategy before she was hired. She adds that since she has started to work at the JBACE, the Regional Planning Strategy has been adopted by the members of the subcommittee. She will send the document to all members. Meetings with the territorial authorities will begin in the coming months, in particular with the regional planning team at the CNG. These meetings will

address the first two action areas simultaneously, as they are closely linked. The drafting of recommendations could begin in the spring, at the same time as discussions continue with the authorities. The discussion document intended to provide guidelines for the meetings is currently being revised by the subcommittee.

Legislative and regulatory portrait

The Executive Director outlines the project. She adds that the consultant sent her the revised report, in which boxes were added, as well as a table listing the various laws. She asks the members how far they have got with the revision of the inventory. The work is in progress. She adds that she prepared a preface that she would share with the members of the subcommittee, prior to a meeting of it. Once everything has been completed, the JBACE will be able to adopt the report and draw up a plan for its dissemination.

At the request of members, the Executive Director will send the report to all members.

Agriculture

The Executive Director mentions that work was underway to revise the *Agricultural Operations Regulation*. Co-creation workshops are scheduled for the week following the meeting, but it will not be possible to attend. However, a virtual workshop is planned for the morning of December 8, 2023, to which the JBACE should be invited. As there is no subcommittee dedicated to this issue, an ad hoc subcommittee is created to take part in the meeting in December. The Executive Director will share the information when she receives it.

2030 Nature Plan

The Analyst reviews the file and recalls her participation in Québec's national biodiversity forum held on September 27, 2023. Virtual mobilizations with Indigenous communities and organizations were held on October 31 and November 2, 2023. She highlights certain shortcomings in the consultation process and the lack of new information in the documents. She mentions that the consultation period via a questionnaire would end on December 8, 2023. The members agree that the JBACE would not respond to the questionnaire and would instead wait for the pre-final publication of the framework, during winter of 2024, before commenting.

Impact Assessment Act

A member provides an update in view of recent developments. He adds that a legislative review was being prepared and should be presented in the spring or summer of 2024.

ADJOURN

As all the files have been covered, the meeting is adjourned at noon. Following the lunch break, members travel to the Eco-Centre for a tour of the facility.

***Prepared by Eva Wolf, Secretariat Officer and Michèle Leduc-Lapierre, Executive Director
Adopted on March 13, 2024***

