

subcommittee meeting is still to come. The Secretariat has received contact information for representatives of the MELCCFP regional branch to invite them to attend the WM workshop. The invitation for the April 9, 2025 meeting on critical and strategic minerals has been sent out. Comments on the table and letter for the *Adaptation plan for climate change – biodiversity* have been received. The members of the subcommittee sent their comments on the letter for the *2030 Nature Plan*. Finally, the info note on the *Regulation respecting the sale, lease and granting of rights in immovable rights on lands in the domain* was shared in the report and the previous week, and the Executive Director took part in the information meeting on March 24, 2025.

Subcommittees and membership

The Executive Director asks if any changes are needed to be made to the subcommittees. Following the members' request, she will share the list of subcommittees for their review. She then asks members to send her their summer vacation dates.

Human resources – performance review

The item was discussed in closed session.

Follow-up on finance

A member gives an update on the process within the Quebec government and speaks about the distinction between the Conseil du Trésor and the Conseil des Ministres, depending on the amount requested. The Executive Director says that the funding had been received and that the amount was as requested.

Next meetings

The Executive Director gives an update on forthcoming meetings. She begins by presenting the draft agenda for the meeting of the three committees to be held on September 22-23, 2025, which is acceptable to members. It is decided not to invite the Administrators, but members are in favour of extending invitations to local representatives.

For the 238th meeting to be held on November 26, 2025, the Federal Administrator would be invited.

The 239th meeting will be held on March 19, 2026 at the Marie-Guyart building in Quebec City. The 240th meeting will be held on June 11, 2026 at the CNG office in Montreal. The Executive Director will send invitations to members for these meetings.

PRESENTATION ON BILL 81

The members welcome Ms. Mélissa Gagnon and Ms. Vanessa Chalifour. A round of introductions follows.

Ms. Gagnon gives a brief update on the funding awarding process. She explains that her department oversees the JBNQA's procedures, including committee support and funding. She adds that she is aware of the administrative burden associated with annual funding applications, and mentions that the process is currently being overhauled.

Ms. Gagnon then gives a presentation on Bill 81, which received the Assent on May 28, 2025. She explains that the bill amends a number of provisions of the Environment Quality Act to maximize benefits and improve process efficiency.

She explains the main changes to the environmental impact assessment and review procedure (EIARP) in southern Quebec. The aim of overhauling the EIARP is to maximise benefits and improve efficiency and acceptability to local stakeholders. The idea is not to bypass certain stages, but rather to encourage a more efficient, single-block analysis to facilitate the admissibility of projects and to be able to redirect the project proponent upstream rather than downstream, if necessary. To achieve its aims, the new process will put more energy into the upstream phase of environmental studies. Project proponents will now have to submit an impact study with their project proposal. Project proponents will have to indicate their intentions in their impact study. If necessary, they will have to make adjustments (consult specific groups, carry out sectoral studies, etc.). Until the proponent has completed the

necessary steps, the ministry will not assess the project. This allows the ministry to respond to the proposals and add the necessary measures after public and Indigenous consultations.

Ms. Gagnon points out that the amendments will not apply to the territories covered by the JBNQA unless the communities so wish. This could be a subject for discussion with the northern committees. One member points out that COMEV is facing the same problem and is receiving incomplete projects because proponents are using the process to obtain funding. Often the assessment work takes up energy for projects that we already know are not viable. He asks whether there could be a mechanism to ensure that proponents submit viable projects. Ms. Gagnon replies that the proponent would have to present all the relevant information in his impact study and that a better initial filter would have to be applied to encourage the development of realistic, viable and predictable projects. It is also proposed that the authorisation decision be made closer to the submission of the impact study, to ensure effective benefits. The ministry is aware of this issue, but currently has no mechanism in place to avoid it. However, with the impact assessments submitted with the project, the ministry can quickly determine whether the proposed project is viable, and the Minister can always ask the initiators to carry out more studies.

Bill 81 also introduces sectoral or regional environmental assessment (SREA). As with the amendments to the EIARP, the SREA will not apply to the territories covered by the JBNQA for the time being.

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Forestry

A member presents the CNG's position on Bill 97. He indicates that the ecosystemic approach has been replaced by a zoning approach and adds that, for the time being, the amendments proposed in the bill will not apply to the Territory. The CNG has begun discussions with the MRNF to arrange a meeting on the bill. The JBACQ would like to be part of this discussion.

The Executive Director asks for clarification on certain elements of the bill that could apply because they are not covered by the adapted forestry regime. Following the discussion, it is decided to continue the analysis of the bill while awaiting news from the GNC concerning the meeting with the MRNF.

Waste management

The Analyst recalls that the workshop on waste management (WM) was held on June 4, 2025 in Mistissini and by videoconference. Representatives of the Cree Nation Government, the communities of Mistissini, Nemaska, and Wemindji, the Government of Quebec, and extended producer responsibility waste management organizations (RECYC-QC, Éco Entreprises Québec, Consignation, Éco-peinture) attended. This was a first meeting focused on exposing problems and finding solutions. Participants were given a tour of the ecocentre to get a better idea of the challenges facing communities and existing infrastructure.

The key issues raised during the workshop were distance (and the isolation of some communities), local infrastructure, manpower, funding and the need to raise awareness. WM is an issue that affects everyone and needs to be tackled regionally by facilitating interaction between communities and organisations involved in waste management/collection. The workshop was well received by participants, who expressed an interest in further workshops. They would also like to have a detailed picture of waste management in the region. A thank-you note was sent to the workshop participants, and the Analyst is preparing a report on the workshop, which will also be sent to them.

Following the Provincial Administrator's announcement that a round table would be set up, the members decide that it would be preferable to wait for more information before taking any further action.

Mining activity

The Executive Director will prepare a briefing note on the regulations to implement the amendments to the Mining Act that will be submitted for consultation in the coming year. She summarises the regulations as presented at an

information meeting held on June 5, 2025. The first regulation mainly concerns the conditions for applying for and holding a mining right, for which consultation is scheduled to take place between July and September 2025, with a view to coming into force in late 2025 or early 2026.

The second regulation concerns a number of regulatory measures and adjustments to implement the provisions of the amended Mining Act. Consultation on this regulation is scheduled for autumn 2025 or winter 2026, with entry into force in early 2026. The latter is more technical, containing more than twenty elements, including an annual plan (the holder will have to provide a link to its website in the work report form), the addition of consultation-related expenses to the amounts accepted for exploration work, additional information to be provided in the annual report (not yet determined) and financial compensation in the event of a transfer for restoration. Finally, the third regulation will cover other measures not covered in the first two. Consultation on this regulation is scheduled for 2026, with entry into force in 2026-2027.

The Executive Director then provides an update on the development of the new Quebec Plan for the Development of Critical and Strategic Minerals (QPDCSM). She reminds the members that the JBACE was consulted as part of a pre-consultation process for the development of the new QPDCSM (2025-2030). An information meeting was held with the MRNF on April 9, 2025, at which it was stated that there would be no consultation on the plan as such. The JBACE sent comments on April 30, 2025. Subsequently, a feedback meeting was held on June 9, 2025. The MRNF hopes to have a document by the end of August.

2025-230 departmental plan to develop clientele and enhance wildlife activities

The Executive Director mentions that the committee received a letter on May 30, 2025 concerning the development of the plan. She adds that few details are available at the moment, and that the JBACE would be attending the information sessions to be held next week. The members discuss the proliferation of plans. The Executive Director suggests drawing up a plan of plans to better understand how the various initiatives fit together.

Bill C-5

A member gives a brief overview of the issue. The bill aims to speed up the development of projects of national interest in the context of the trade war with the United States. Assessments would be reduced from five to two years, and the preparatory impact assessment phase would be skipped. These projects would be assessed by the Canadian Development Office, which has yet to be created, and which would involve an Indigenous advisory committee. The members are of the opinion that although the legislation would not necessarily affect the JBNQA process, it is important to see how the legislation would tie in with the provinces and territories covered by the JBNQA. The Executive Director will consult the bill and prepare an info note.

MEETING WITH THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

The Chair welcomes Ms. Marie-Josée Lizotte and Mr. Daniel Labrecque. A round of introductions follows.

Members and guests begin by discussing the celebrations surrounding the JBNQA's 50th anniversary. The Chair reiterates the importance of the agreement for the Territory. She indicates that a meeting between the three northern committees was scheduled for September 2025 in Whapmagoostui/Kuujuuarapik. Ms. Lizotte mentions that she would be talking to the government about the 50th anniversary celebrations.

The first point raised by the Chair concerned funding. She emphasizes that a good relationship had been established between the Executive Director and the government for the management of this file. However, the annual recurrence of the process is administratively cumbersome, and multi-year funding would be desirable. The Administrator mentions that she had negotiated a CT (note: funding via the Conseil du trésor) for the next two years, but acknowledged that multi-year funding would have to become a reality. The Administrator and the Assistant Deputy Minister indicate that their teams were currently working on this issue. When questioned, the Executive Director said that despite the cumbersome nature of the process, it had become very fluid over time.

The Executive Director then mentions that the JBACE has a new website. The old site was outdated, and the new one will make it possible to transmit information more efficiently. In addition to sharing information about the committee, the site also contains a section presenting the environmental and social protection regime under Section 22 of the JBNQA. Ms. Lizotte asks whether the Secretariat has any statistics on the number of visitors to the site. The Executive Director says that she could send her the statistics along with the link to the site.

The Executive Director then presents the legislative and regulatory portrait, a document that had been adopted over the past year and is available in French and English. She explains that the committee needed a better understanding of the laws and regulations applying in the Territory in relation to the mandate. The JBACE worked with a researcher from the Université de Sherbrooke to carry out the work, which consisted of an inventory of the laws and regulations as well as a description of governance according to the categories of land. She adds that, given its legislative nature, the document would evolve over time as legislation changed. She suggests sending the document to Ms. Lizotte after the meeting. Ms. Lizotte indicates that the ministry is trying to simplify and consolidate the regulatory framework. A legislative and regulatory strategy office is in operation to simplify the procedure. She talks about the value of omnibuses in simplifying cumbersome legislation and regulations.

The last point discussed is waste management (WM). The Chair and a member share the main conclusions of the workshop held the previous week in Mistissini. Ms. Lizotte says she had heard good things about the workshop. She adds that a permanent table of committees had been set up to address the issue of WM in the Territory, and that the JBACE would be approached in the near future. One member adds that Nunavik already has a WM committee that could serve as a model.

The members thank Ms. Lizotte and Mr. Labrecque for attending.

Following the meeting, the members discuss the WM exchange. One member says that the Nunavik committee had provided a snapshot of the situation in each community and standardized the management of waste at the regional level. It has also put communities in touch with organisations in the south and created an intermediary between the north and the south. Another member comments on the committee's relevance. The Chair reiterates that it is important for the stakeholders to travel to the Territory for the workshop in order to see the realities. The Executive Director points out that the workshop had created a direct link between the owner of the grocery shop in Mistissini and the people from Consignation, for example. One member adds that the experience of the people on site made a difference, giving them a better understanding of the realities of the Territory. Another observation that came out of the discussion was that the workshop would have to be planned further in advance next time. We'll also need funding and ideas for other (meeting) locations to simplify logistics.

FOLLOW-UP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Objective 1.1 Evaluate the legislative framework of the environmental and social protection regime

The Executive Director states that after adopting the legislative portrait, the members had approved the following elements for further development: taking climate change into account in impact assessments, project monitoring and follow-up, impact assessment procedures, water and waste management.

The waste management framework was developed up by the Analyst in preparation for the workshop. Work on climate change and water is scheduled to begin over the summer. Monitoring and follow-up will be dealt with in the section on this objective.

Objective 1.2 Evaluate the transparency of the environmental and social impact assessment and review process

The Analyst mentions that a second project is currently being evaluated. She adds that this objective had been set aside in recent months in order to prioritise other more urgent matters.

Objective 1.3 Evaluate the follow-up and monitoring of authorized projects

The Analyst mentions that a preparatory document is well underway. The committee will also be working on the legislative framework for monitoring and surveillance of projects authorised in the region.

Objective 1.4 Provide recommendations for the consideration of cumulative effects in the environmental and social impact assessment and review process

The Analyst says that since March 2025, she has been making progress on the report on our recommendations for data related to cumulative effects. Work has also begun on the next steps in this project.

Objective 2.1 Meetings with strategic partners

The Executive Director reminds everyone that the meeting with the Provincial Administrator had taken place during the meeting. The Cree Administrator would be invited to Whapmagoostui. She adds that the Federal Administrator could be invited to the November 2025 meeting or the following one. The Administrators could also be invited to take part in the meeting of the three committees (by videoconference if they so wished).

For the purposes of monitoring targets in connection with the strategic plan, the members agreed that all relevant meetings should be counted as "meetings with strategic partners" and not just those with the Administrators and the local leadership of the communities visited.

Objective 2.2 Improve the visibility and communications of the JBACE

The Executive Director mentions that apart from the Cree version of the website, the Secretariat had not had time to look into other communication initiatives. The members mention the relevance of setting up a bi-annual newsletter.

AJOURNMENT

The meeting is adjourned

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