



## MINUTES OF THE 194th MEETING OF THE JAMES BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

**(ADOPTED)**

**DATE:** September 21, 22 and 23, 2015

**PLACE:** Wapachee family trapline (Sept. 21) and Capissisit Lodge in Oujé-Bougoumou (Sept. 22 and 23)

**PRESENT:** François Boulanger, Canada  
Manon Cyr, Québec  
Pascale Labbé, Québec  
Ginette Lajoie, Cree Nation Government (CNG)  
Jean-Pierre Laniel, Québec  
Chantal Otter Tétreault, GNC, Vice-Chairperson  
Jean Picard, Canada (by phone)  
Melissa Saganash, CNG, Chairperson  
Monique Lucie Sauriol, Canada (by phone)

Marc Jetten, Executive Secretary  
Graeme Morin, Environmental Analyst

**ABSENT:** Line Choinière, Canada  
Guy Héту, Québec  
Rodney Mark, ex-officio member, Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC)

### **GUESTS:**

#### **For the field visit on Sept. 21:**

Jacqueline Leroux, Regional Vice-President, Environment, BlackRock Metals  
Abel Bosum, Negotiator, Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)  
Curtis Bosum, Chief, Cree Nation of Oujé-Bougoumou  
Lance Cooper, Deputy Chief, Cree Nation of Oujé-Bougoumou  
Adario Masty, Local Environment Administrator, Cree Nation of Oujé-Bougoumou

**For Item 2:** Johanne Morasse, Natural Resources Committee,  
Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (EIJBRG)

**For items 11 and 12 (by phone):** Stéphanie Bleau, impacts, adaptation and vulnerability specialist,  
OURANOS  
Geneviève Brisson, professor of anthropology,  
Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR)

**For Item 13:** Pamela MacLeod, Environment Analyst, Cree Nation Government  
Hubert Petawabano, Local Environment Administrator, Cree First Nation of  
Mistissini

## **Monday, September 21, 2015**

### **1. FIELD VISIT TO THE FUTURE BLACKROCK MINE SITE**

Jacqueline Leroux of BlackRock took the members on a tour of the future mine site, located around 30 km east of Chibougamau as the crow flies. The site, including the mine, concentrator and tailings sites, is roughly 3 km<sup>2</sup> in size. Ms. Leroux explained the steps taken by the company to contact the Crees and take their concerns into account. The project has undergone several changes with a view to mitigating the impact on the Wapachee family's traditional pursuits. For example, plans to use a lake as a tailings site were abandoned because it is located near a moose yard.

Abel Bosum of the Grand Council of the Crees (GCC) explained that the Wapachee family was somewhat hesitant to agree to a new project on their hunting ground (trapline). The city of Chibougamau, the Joe Mann mine and the old Campbell mine are already located on their hunting ground. The vanadium mine project submitted in 2002, which was abandoned before being carried out, was located on the same deposit as the one targeted by the BlackRock project. Because these developments are located in the southern part of their hunting ground, the Wapachee family had to concentrate its activities in the northern part, which is why it requested that the ecological footprint of the BlackRock project be reduced.

BlackRock Metals, the Wapachee family, the Cree Nation of Oujé-Bougoumou and the GCC held talks over two years to reach an impact and benefits agreement (IBA). The company undertook to, among other things, concentrate on iron ore production, which does not generate acid mine drainage during processing.

Abel Bosum thinks that ripple effects of the project need to be taken into account. It's not just the impact of the mine site itself that has to be considered, but the impact of the entire infrastructure, in particular truck transportation. For example, dozens of trucks a day driving by the Wapachee family's camp will create a lot of noise and dust. Mr. Bosum mentioned that animals don't have borders: by nature, they try to avoid disturbances, making them harder to hunt. Abel Bosum explained that during the talks to reach an agreement with the mining company, the parties gave priority to provisions dealing with the project's environmental and social impacts and the related mitigation measures. The economic benefits of the project (jobs, contracts, training) were discussed afterward.

Jacqueline Leroux said that BlackRock has roots in the region, so it knows the territory well and the value it holds for the Crees and Jamésiens. The company shares the Crees' concern about protecting the environment and critical habitat needed to pursue traditional activities. Abel Bosum thinks that the fact that BlackRock is a small company facilitated the talks, because it normally takes a lot longer to reach an IBA.

For Curtis Bosum, Chief of the Oujé-Bougoumou Crees, having access to project-related information is a question of safety. Sometimes employees of mining companies are working in the area unbeknownst to Crees who are hunting. More and more, the Crees take the initiative, especially during events bringing together mining developers, of raising awareness about the importance of keeping communities informed and working with them on projects. Curtis Bosum explained that the Cree Mining Policy needs to be updated by spelling out the requirements for informing communities.

Abel Bosum pointed out that the agreement on regional governance signed between the Québec government and the Cree Nation Government in 2012 includes several provisions dealing with informing the Crees. For example, the CNG must be informed immediately whenever the Ministère de l'Énergie et des Ressources naturelles issues a claim in the James Bay territory. However, these provisions have still not been implemented.

In terms of procedure, Abel Bosum recommends that project proponents start by contacting the Cree First Nation (band council), who can then refer the proponent either to the tallyman concerned or a resource person with the First Nation or the GCC. Mr. Bosum thinks that a meeting between company representatives

and the trappers concerned is crucial to taking the pulse of their interests and concerns. The company can then gather information to establish the baseline state, especially since very little information in this regard is available for the James Bay territory. According to Abel Bosum, post-authorization monitoring of mining activities remains a challenge.

## ***Tuesday, September 22***

### **2. PRESENTATION BY JOHANNE MORASSE ON THE EYYOU ISTCHEE JAMES BAY REGIONAL GOVERNMENT'S NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

The JBACE chairperson mentioned that the EIJB RG had established a natural resources committee, with equal representation by the Crees and Jamésians, to prepare the first regional plan for integrated land and resource development (RPILRD, or 'PRDIRT' in French). The plan would apply to Category III lands and determine the policy directions for development as well as the regional priorities relating to natural resource and land use. A member explained that the RPILRD will be designed to complement the planning initiatives of the Cree Nation Government and the Administration régionale Baie James.

A member explained that work on the RPILRD has not progressed very much, first because the provisions of the Agreement on Governance in Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory are being implemented gradually and, second, because the EIJB RG is waiting on funding from the Québec government so it can see the RPILRD through.

Johanne Morasse said that the Natural Resources Committee will also be tasked with supervising the integrated land and resource management panels (ILRMPs, or 'TGIRT' in French). Each of the 21 forest development units in the territory of the EIJB RG will have an ILRMP responsible, during forest planning, for taking into account the interests and concerns of the different categories of users. The plan will be in the form of values, objectives, indicators and targets.

A member explained that some ILRMPs could be combined, in particular where the same forest companies operate on different development units. The aim is to avoid having players spread over several panels.

The Crees will also participate in the ILRMPs. A member pointed out, however, that the panels do not replace the consultation mechanisms provided for in the adapted forestry regime under the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between le Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec (ANRQC). The territory covered by the regime encompasses 15 of the 21 development units of the EIJB RG. Ms. Morasse stressed the inclusiveness of the ILRMPs in terms of representation. For example, some panels have representatives from Aboriginal women's groups concerned with, among other things, sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants in the bush.

Over the next three years, the Natural Resources Committee also plans to participate in the consultations on the public land use plan, on tactical plans for integrated forest development and on the allowable cuts calculated by the chief forester. The Natural Resources Committee will also monitor developments under the Transportation and Sustainable Mobility Plan for the Nord-du-Québec administrative region. Lastly, implementation of the Plan Nord could lead to consultations on the objectives of protecting 50% of the territory north of the 49th parallel by creating new protected areas (20% of the area covered by the Plan) and setting aside areas for non-industrial purposes (30%).

### **3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

On motion by Ginette Lajoie, seconded by Pascale Labbé, the agenda was adopted as amended.

#### **4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 193RD MEETING (JUNE 9 AND 10, 2015)**

On motion by Chantal Otter Tétreault, seconded by François Boulanger, the minutes of the 193rd meeting (Gatineau, June 9 and 10, 2015) were adopted as amended.

#### **5. EVENT TO MARK THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE JBNQA**

The Grand Council of the Crees plans to mark the 40th anniversary of the JBNQA, signed in 1975, at an event in Mistissini on November 10 and 11, 2015. If invited, the JBACE will send a delegate.

#### **6. PRIORITIES FOR 2015-2017**

##### **a. *Reflection on strategic environmental assessment***

A delegation submitted the JBACE's comments on the Green Paper on the modernization of the environmental authorization regime under the *Environment Quality Act* (EQA) at the Committee on Transportation and the Environment consultations in Québec City on September 3, 2015. Now the JBACE wants to continue its reflection process by holding another workshop to help prepare, among other things, comments on the anticipated bill to modernize the EQA.

The workshop would serve to determine what SEA should focus on, how the results of an SEA could inform decisions and authorizations, and how the Crees could be involved. A JBACE subcommittee will call on an outside resource person to help organize the workshop and prepare the recommendations report.

##### **b. *Cumulative effects study***

The subcommittee on priorities plans to consult an expert in cumulative effects assessment to determine the terms of reference for the study. The study will include a comparison with other jurisdictions in order to identify the principles and standards of cumulative effects assessments. The study would also deal with cumulative effects in a sampling of impact studies conducted under the Section 22 assessment and review procedure.

A member suggested that the Chairperson see if we can get funding from a government agency to conduct the cumulative effects study.

##### **c. *Access to data from impact studies***

The JBACE will write to associations of proponents or major developers in the Territory to gauge their interest in sharing data from their impact studies, on the baseline state of the environment and monitoring studies. According to a member, sharing this data would be an asset for proponents because they often have little knowledge about the environment of the project area. Another member said that the Cree Nation Government is interested in obtaining georeferenced data to help delineate the study area for a development project.

##### **d. *Approach for reviewing forest development plans***

The secretary passed on a proposal for the ways and means of a brainstorming workshop on the JBACE's review of integrated forest development plans (IFDPs). A forestry subcommittee was struck to examine the issues associated with reviewing IFDPs, in particular the risk of duplicating work carried out by the ANRQC bodies.

The JBACE will be resuming its review once the Québec government and the Crees have reached an agreement on the arrangements for implementing the *Sustainable Forest Development Act* (2010) forest regime in the territory covered by the adapted forestry regime established by the ANRQC, as stipulated in the Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory.

## **7. DISCUSSION PANEL ON SOCIAL ACCEPTABILITY: FOLLOW-UP**

The Chairperson reminded the members of the steps taken by the Grand Council of the Crees (GCC) and the JBACE, in particular, to ask the Ministère de l'Énergie et des Ressources naturelles (MÉRN) to hold a discussion panel on social acceptability in the James Bay Territory. The MÉRN finally agreed and the GCC organized a panel in Mistissini on September 3. The same as for the panels held in southern Québec, the panel in Mistissini was chaired by Johanne Gélinas of RCGT.

The JBACE will write to the Deputy Minister of Energy and Natural Resources to stress, as seen during the panel discussions in Mistissini, the special meaning social acceptability holds in the JBNQA territory. The Committee will also underline the advisory role it could play during future consultations on a possible green paper on social acceptability.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

As the Chairperson was not available the following day, the members set the dates of the next meeting: December 8 and 9, 2015, in Montréal. Part of the day on December 8 will be devoted to the workshop on strategic environmental assessment.

### ***Wednesday, September 23***

In the Chairperson's absence, Vice-Chairperson Chantal Otter Tétreault chaired the meeting.

## **9. ADMINISTRATION**

### **a. *New member appointed by the Cree Nation Government***

The Executive Committee of the Grand Council of the Crees/Cree Nation Government appointed Andy Baribeau to replace John Paul Murdoch on the JBACE. A copy of the resolution will be sent to the JBACE secretariat as soon as possible.

### **b. *Adoption of budget proposal for fiscal 2016-2017***

The secretary presented the budget proposal approved by the Administrative Committee. The proposal respects the forecasts in the five-year financial framework, i.e. an estimated 2% annual increase in remuneration and operating costs. If needed, the JBACE can establish a different rate at salary review time.

On motion by Manon Cyr, seconded by Ginette Lajoie, the budget proposal for fiscal 2016-2017 was adopted unanimously.

### **c. *JBACE subsidy for fiscal 2015-2016***

The JBACE received a letter from the Deputy Minister of the MDDELCC and the President of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency announcing that it was being granted \$331 000 for fiscal 2015-2016 (minus the \$30 000 for the secretariat expenses of the Evaluating Committee—COMEV). The representatives of the funding bodies indicated that the amount of the subsidy could be adjusted over the coming years to ensure that the operating fund (accumulated surplus) does not exceed \$100 000.

The JBACE will write to the Deputy Minister of the MDDELCC explaining that it accepts the proposed limit for the operating fund, provided that the MDDELCC makes the subsidy payment at the start of the fiscal year. Otherwise, the JBACE will be forced to deplete its operating fund and close its secretariat temporarily.

## **10. FILE UPDATE**

### **a. *Secondary objectives of the priorities for 2015-2017***

#### **i. Assessment of the capacities of the evaluating and review committees**

The Chairperson and the subcommittee on public participation will be meeting with the Review Committee (COMEX) and COMEV on October 2, 2015 to present the JBACE's recommendations regarding public participation and enquire about the committees' resources for conducting public participation activities, in particular in terms of expertise and collaboration.

A JBACE member and the analyst will be meeting with the chairperson and members of the Review Panel (COFEX-South) on October 7 for the same purpose.

#### **ii. Information on mineral exploration activities**

In follow-up to the recommendations regarding the handling of mineral exploration projects under the assessment and review procedure, the analyst prepared non-technical fact sheets on the different types of exploration. Once finalized, the fact sheets will be posted on the JBACE website to provide information in plain language as a supplement to the recommendations.

#### **iii. Reflection on the collaboration between the BAPE and JBACE commissions on issues related to uranium development**

The members of the JBACE Commission on issues related to uranium development held a post-mortem meeting with their BAPE counterparts on September 4. The meeting underscored the importance of respecting each body's independence and establishing a clear protocol beforehand to set out the terms of collaboration between the BAPE and JBACE commissions. In addition, both commissions think it is vital to write a joint report, rather than separate reports, at the end of the exercise.

In the view of the JBACE commissioners, if a similar collaboration takes place again, it will be important to define provisions allowing the JBACE commissioners to have access to information held by the BAPE; during the inquiry into uranium industry issues, the JBACE commissioners could not access BAPE information without taking a solemn oath. Furthermore, both commissions need to establish rules regarding joint dissemination of public information.

The resource person for the JBACE Commission is expected to submit a draft post-mortem report shortly. The subcommittee on public participation will go over the report and decide whether additional recommendations should be made in light of the experience with the consultations on the uranium industry.

## **11. PRESENTATION BY STÉPHANIE BLEAU, COORDINATION TEAM, NORTHERN ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH PROGRAM, OURANOS, CONSORTIUM ON REGIONAL CLIMATOLOGY AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

Stéphanie Bleau participated in the workshop on environmental and social knowledge acquisition, held in Mistissini on March 2014, as a climate change impact, adaptation and vulnerability specialist. One of the findings that came out of the workshop was the lack of research on major issues related to climate change impacts in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory (compared with Nunavik). Participants stressed the need for further efforts to increase outreach and communication activities to improve the dissemination of acquired knowledge and to better inform the decision-making authorities in charge of development in the Territory.

As a follow-up to the workshop in Mistissini, Ms. Bleau sought to raise greater awareness about Ouranos and its research activities among stakeholders in the Territory. She presented some of the work the consortium has carried out and gave examples of outcomes and deliverables from its overall program (guidebook to help municipal authorities make decisions on adapting to climate change impacts, guidebook on climate scenarios, northern biodiversity atlas, among others).

Ouranos works on the frontier between research and application and its approach is based on a participatory, partnership philosophy. The consortium's structure is centred around two themes: one team of specialists focuses more on socioeconomic and environmental aspects through vulnerability and impact analysis and the science of climate change adaptation (VI&A); a second team is in charge of climate science, produces climate scenarios, conducts hydro-climatic analyses and develops regional climate models.

Ouranos has a network of some 100 bodies including over 450 scientists and professionals. As it is starting a new scientific cycle, Ouranos has over 50 projects underway and several will be developed during the period 2014-2019.<sup>1</sup> The VI&A team works on 10 thematic programs dealing with issues deemed to be of priority concern: energy supply; water management; health; public and infrastructure safety; agriculture; mining; tourism and transportation; natural and sociocultural environment.<sup>2</sup>

An advisory body, known as the "program committee," is created for each theme-based program and is responsible for developing and overseeing a scientific program. In keeping with the consortium's values of work quality and scientific rigour, every project must comply with the established governance procedures. Once a project has been approved, the coordinator must set up a monitoring committee to ensure the project's successful implementation.

The consortium informs and advises decision-makers in identifying, assessing, promoting and implementing regional and local climate change adaptation strategies. With the goal of strengthening capacities, Ouranos adopted an inclusive governance approach that involves communities, in particular Aboriginal communities. The northern environment research program is currently focusing on the consideration given to climate change in the authorization process. Other research priorities are food security and resource management in northern regions.

A member asked about progress in the state of knowledge on climate change in the James Bay region. Ms. Bleau replied that the consortium published climate change scenarios based on the

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<sup>1</sup> Ms. Bleau provided a list of projects.

<sup>2</sup> For further information: [www.ouranos.ca/en/our-organisation/structure.php](http://www.ouranos.ca/en/our-organisation/structure.php)

latest simulations, including permafrost, the ice regime, shoreline erosion and forest management. A number of research projects deal specifically with the James Bay region, including climate change impacts on wildfowl and woodland caribou habitat, as well as storm patterns in the marine area. Members also raised the issue of the decline of eelgrass beds along the coast of James Bay, as they are important feeding areas for wildfowl.

Ms. Bleau mentioned that Ouranos is also preparing a climate portrait of the James Bay region. According to a member, this knowledge could be helpful in adapting directives for impact statements to projects in the North. On the issue of ticks affecting the moose population, Ms. Bleau said that although Ouranos has not studied the phenomenon yet, it's very likely that the parasite's range has expanded northward due to climate warming<sup>3</sup>.

There are various ways in which regional and local organizations can participate in Ouranos' research to stay abreast of latest developments. Managers, practitioners and experts can get involved in the program committee or in actual projects. The vast, consensus-building network disseminates up-to-date information on climate science and climate change adaptation to local, regional and institutional bodies/persons<sup>4</sup>.

## **12. PRESENTATION BY GENEVIÈVE BRISSON (UQAR) ON THE INTEGRATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH DETERMINANTS INTO ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

In the same spirit as the work carried out by Ouranos, Geneviève Brisson explained that this project addresses the Cree Board of Health and Social Services' call for involvement in the environmental assessment of projects in the James Bay Territory. The goal of the project, which is being carried out by the Institut national de santé publique (INSPQ) with collaboration from the academic and health communities, is to improve the health of Crees living in the Territory by better preparing environmental assessments, in particular by giving greater consideration to the health effects of projects and climate change. To that end, an adapted toolkit was specially created for environmental assessment of projects in the Territory.

Ms. Brisson explained that the project looked in particular at the current impact assessment and review process and the consideration given to health impacts. The first finding was that a lot of information about specific projects was not available to the public. Moreover, the Cree Health Board has a hard time putting its concerns forward during the assessment and review process, for various reasons including the short time allowed for giving comments on voluminous impact statements.

The toolkit is designed for diverse audiences (analysts working for government and para-governmental bodies, consultants and proponents, leaders and members of the communities) and takes the form of grids, reference documents, questionnaires and short presentations on the known aspects of a project and the health and climate issues that need to be taken into consideration. Ms. Brisson underlined the comprehensive view taken by the Crees, whereby environmental or climate impacts can result in health problems due to the Crees' spiritual beliefs, attachment to the land and a way of life in which wildlife harvesting plays a key role.

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<sup>3</sup> Rodenhouse, N.L., L.M. Christeson, D. Parry et L.E. Green. « Climate change effects on native fauna of northeastern forests », *Canadian Journal of Forest Research*, vol. 39, 2009, p. 249-263.

<sup>4</sup> Ouranos (2015). *Vers L'adaptation : Synthèse des connaissances sur les changements climatiques au Québec*



A member asked if the authors had identified projects where health and climate change impacts were considered; the Eastmain 1-A/Rupert hydroelectric development project, for example. Ms. Brisson said that those issues were not covered by the methodology adopted to produce the toolkit. However, she did say that, in her opinion, the Eastmain 1-A/Rupert project is exceptional owing to the large volume of documents produced and available to the public. She stressed that indirect health effects also need to be taken into account.

In reply to a question, Ms. Brisson said that the early ice melt in spring could be an example of the connection between climate change and Cree health. This phenomenon creates a danger for Crees travelling by snowmobile to their camps to hunt waterfowl; the health impact of a decline in traditional pursuits could be significant. She also gave the example of the food served in work camps. With few other options available to workers, their poor eating habits could result in a higher incidence of cardiovascular disease or obesity. In one member's opinion, workers' individual responsibility for eating well or not must be taken into account too.

According to Ms. Brisson, the toolkit is also aimed at encouraging project proponents to integrate citizen participation. Proponents should establish an initial profile of the community affected by their project, for example by setting out the key health determinants. At the moment, this is a challenge due to the separation of powers, with one department being responsible for health and another department for environmental assessment.

A member mentioned the JBACE priority regarding dissemination of data from impact studies and monitoring studies. Having access to this data would make it easier to establish a baseline state of the environment and a profile of the community concerned. Members pointed out that the current scale of project assessments is not ideal for taking climate change impacts into account. The JBACE believes that adopting strategic environmental assessment would make it possible to take better account of issues, including climate issues, upstream of development projects.

### **13. MEETING WITH PAMELA MACLEOD OF THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT AND HUBERT PETAWABANO OF THE CREE FIRST NATION OF MISTISSINI TO GIVE FEEDBACK ON THE CONSULTATIONS ON ISSUES RELATED TO URANIUM DEVELOPMENT**

The JBACE invited Pamela MacLeod, who ran Mistissini's documentation centre on uranium issues, and Hubert Petawabano, Local Environment Administrator for Mistissini, to share their experience of the consultations on the uranium industry. The BAPE and JBACE commissions visited the community during each of the three consultation phases, that is, pre-consultation (June 2014), questions and information (September) and presentation of briefs (November).

Pamela MacLeod explained that her role consisted in informing people, in a non-partisan manner, of the conduct of the consultation to help them prepare their oral or written submissions. She also visited schools to explain the consultation process and the issues to students. Few people visited the documentation centre.

Hubert Petawabano represented his community in making an oral submission. He tried to be objective while complying with the chief's and band council's directives. Mr. Petawabano said that, compared to the consultations held by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission on the Matoush uranium exploration project, the BAPE and JBACE commissions gave people more opportunity to express their views and opinions.

*Conduct of the consultations*

Pamela MacLeod explained that the background to the uranium consultations wasn't clear at first. Many people confused the exercise with the consultations on the Matoush project. In addition, several people initially found the connection between the three consultation phases vague. According to Ms. MacLeod, participants were more reassured when the conduct of the consultations was explained to them in Cree, like when the chair of the JBACE commission spoke.

According to Ms. MacLeod, a certain degree of flexibility is needed during consultations in order for the Crees to participate. The commissions did a good job of adapting in this regard. On the other hand, in the second phase of the consultations, there was a lot of technical information being discussed among the experts and it led several people to disengage. According to Mr. Petawabano, experts should clearly explain their role and take part in the activities held to prepare the community for the consultation. In addition, Ms. MacLeod noted that when an expert put off answering a question in order to verify information, people didn't know where to go to find the answer after the consultation process was over.

In response to a comment by a member, Ms. MacLeod said that, in her view, it would have been useful to hold a meeting in the community to validate information before the BAPE tabled its report of recommendations. That way, participants would have been able to tie their input during the consultations to the content of the final report. Mr. Petawabano thinks that the same type of meeting would also be useful before the Review Committee (COMEX) submits its recommendations.

In Mr. Petawabano's opinion, the connection between the BAPE's report and ensuing events isn't clear. Basically, he thinks the process is complex. Noteworthy as well is the fact that the community of Mistissini has hosted numerous consultations over the last few years, on a number of different projects. Mr. Petawabano and a member agreed that the pre-consultation work carried out by the leaders of the community and the Cree Nation Government is crucial in preparing people for the consultations by explaining the process and the issues.

*Participant input and the dissemination of information*

In reply to a question, Pamela MacLeod said that the way the room was set up, with the commissioners sitting at a table at the front of the room, can be intimidating for some people. She suggested holding small focus groups or conducting individual interviews to encourage participation by people who aren't comfortable in more formal settings.

A member asked how project-related information is passed on to the community. Mr. Petawabano said it all depends on the project. The Renard mining project was exemplary in this regard because Stornoway held "open house" events every three months, well in advance of the COMEX consultations. On the issue of funding for public participation, Mr. Petawabano thinks that it would enable the community to get an objective opinion from independent experts. Currently, funding for public participation is only available for projects subject to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

#### **14. OTHER BUSINESS**

**a. *Impact monitoring of the Opemiska tailings dam failure***

The JBACE will invite the director of mine site restoration at the MÉRN to come and give a progress report on fish habitat monitoring, the restoration work and communication with the community of Waswanipi further to the Opemiska tailings dam failure in 2008.

**b. *Guidance document for proponents in the self-assessment process under the Fisheries Act***

The JBACE analyst said that the regional office of Fisheries and Oceans Canada expects to finish reviewing the guidance document for proponents prepared by the JBACE by the end of the month.

**c. *Characterization study of the Cape Jones (Pointe Louis XIV) contaminated site***

A member explained that the MDDELCC hired a consulting firm to conduct the site characterization. The firm is working with the community of Chisasibi to hire people on the ground and with the Cree Nation Government for expertise in archaeology. The characterization report should be submitted this fall.



Marc Jetten  
Executive Secretary  
December 10, 2015