



February 2, 2010

Ms. Nathalie Normandeau, Chair  
Interdepartmental Committee on the Northern Plan  
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune  
5700, 4<sup>e</sup> Avenue Ouest, A 308  
Québec (Québec) G1H 6R1

**Subject: Role of the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment  
regarding the Northern Plan**

Dear Ms. Normandeau:

The James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment (JBACE) would like to inform the Interdepartmental Committee on the Northern Plan of the role that our Committee should play during development of the Plan. We would like to clarify the JBACE's mandate, emphasize the importance of its involvement in the work arising from the Northern Plan and propose a meeting with you to discuss these matters. The Committee is the governments' official and preferential forum for any environmental and social measures affecting James Bay.

Under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, the JBACE has a mandate to oversee administration of the environmental and social protection regime pursuant to Section 22. The regime includes protection of the hunting, fishing and trapping rights of Native people as well as protection of their communities and economy. The mandate of the JBACE includes analyzing draft laws and regulations to ensure they comply with the provisions of Section 22 of the Agreement. The JBACE shall also make known its observations regarding policies and plans that give rise to laws and regulations.

The JBACE's initiatives are designed to ensure application of the guiding principles of the environmental and social protection regime, upstream from the measures proposed by the governments. In accordance with this mandate, we believe that the JBACE should be invited to take part in the work of the two discussion tables, namely the main Partners' Discussion Table and the Aboriginal Partners' Discussion Table, in order to co-operate on defining the issues, priorities and work procedure.

Since the Northern Plan was announced by the Québec government in 2008, the JBACE has emphasized two points in its discussion of the matter, notably in a letter it sent to the Premier:

- The need to ensure consultation in good and due form of Native communities and bodies created under agreements with Native nations; and
- The relevance of carrying out a strategic environmental assessment of the transportation sector with respect to the Northern Plan.

As regards the second point, it is vital, owing to the types of development proposed in the Northern Plan, to have an overview of the cumulative impacts on the communities and the territory. A transportation sector evaluation is preferred because it would focus on structuring projects that may lead to other types of development. In the James Bay territory, it is important to integrate environmental and social considerations upstream from the procedure because of the fragile nature of the ecosystems and the Crees' land regime, which is based on hunting, fishing and trapping.

We would be pleased to meet with the Interdepartmental Committee on the Northern Plan to clarify the JBACE's mandate and to discuss the issues related to the Plan in greater detail. Our Executive Secretary, Marc Jetten, would be pleased to make the arrangements for such a meeting ((514) 286-4400). We also invite you to contact him at any time regarding any matter concerning the JBACE.

We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Ashley Iserhoff  
Chairman

- cc. Mr. Matthew Coon Come, Grand Chief, Grand Council of the Crees  
Mr. Pierre Corbeil, Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs  
Ms. Line Beauchamp, Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks  
Ms. Julie Boulet, Minister of Transport  
Mr. Christian Dubois, Associate Deputy Minister, Northern Plan, MRNF  
Mr. Pita Aatami, President, Makivik Corporation  
Mr. Edward Shecanapish, President, Naskapi Development Corporation  
Mr. Michael Barrett, Chairman, Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee  
Mr. Jacques Ruelland, President, Regroupement national des conseils régionaux de l'environnement du Québec  
Ms. Suzann Méthot, Regional Director – Québec, Canadian Boreal Initiative  
Mr. Patrick Nadeau, Co-Executive Director, CPAWS - Québec  
Mr. Michel Bélanger, President, Nature Québec  
Mr. Clément Guimond, President, Équiterre