

**BUREAU D’AUDIENCES PUBLIQUES
SUR L’ENVIRONNEMENT**

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 M. HARM SLOTERDÏJK, commissaire CCEBJ

**CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE
SUR LA GESTION DE L’EAU
AU QUÉBEC**

**PREMIÈRE PARTIE
(NORD-DU-QUÉBEC)**

VOLUME 1

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Whapmagoostui

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MOT DES PRÉSIDENTS

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

5 Thank you, Romeo.

 It's an honor and a pleasure for us to be here in this community to speak about water management policy. The Minister of the Environment, Mr. Paul Bégin, mandated the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement to make a hearing and an inquiry about water
10 management in Québec.

 The Bureau d'Audiences Publiques sur l'Environnement is a special body specialized in public consultation all over Québec. And when there is an inquiry and a large consultation on environment, the Minister mandates the Bureau d'audiences publiques.
15

 I am the Chairman of this Commission. We are three members on the Commission. One is not here and the third one is Madam Gisèle Gallichan here present on the board today.

 We received our mandate which is going from the 15th of March 1999 to 15th of March
20 2000. We made long trips all around the 17 regions of Québec and we meet people everywhere to hear what the people have to say about public management of water and to understand the question and sometimes to put on the table all the information which is accessible on these topics.

 For the region here, we made an agreement between the two nations in the James Bay Convention. So, we made a convention with the Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee and also with the James Bay Advisory Committee on the environment to consult a few communities. It was important for us because you do have your own ways of consultation, your own bodies to that, and we thought, and I think it's a good decision, that it was better to
30 work together with the James Bay Advisory Committee on the environment to come here in the community and to be able to make the consultation here.

 Our mandate for the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement is to consult the population about all the politics referring to the water management. The Ministry published this
35 document you have in the background, Water Management in Québec, which is the general statement about this consultation. It speaks about groundwater, surface water, municipal infrastructures and also the global strategic issues. As you know, the water problems now are problems all over the world and not only here in Québec or in Canada.

 For the region here, the Ministry of the Environment, the region, published also a paper you have in the back which is Regional Water Resource Profile where you can find a few data about the region of the north. I think that there is also a Cree version of this text in the back.
40

45 We won't go through all this document now. If you want to have a copy, there are
copies in the back. But I think it is more important today to hear what you want to tell us today.
What we want to know is what must be the goal of a policy on the environment? What are the
guiding principles and priorities? Do you have any idea of the frame in which we must work
together?

50 But this is a general survey, a general purpose, and we want also want to know what
you're feeling about the water management now for you. What are the problems you are
facing now? What are your hopes, your fears, your perception of the problems we are facing
together?

55 If you have any specific questions, we invited people from different ministries of the
government. We can say that these people are experts in their specific fields. So, I will intro-
duce them and, after the presentation of the community, it will be a pleasure for them to
answer the questions if they can, the questions you will have to ask to the Commission today.

60 So, these experts are, from the right to the left at the first table, Mr. Jocelin Dufresne,
Daniel Berrouard, Josée Brazeau and Guy Fournier for the Ministry of the Environment. Mr.
Vincent Sioui from Hydro-Québec. Monsieur Paul Meunier et Madame Nathalie Camden from
the Ministry of Natural Resources. Madam Claire Laliberté from le Centre de Santé Publique
65 du Québec. And in the back, two persons from the Ministère des Affaires Municipales,
Municipal Affairs, Monsieur Robert Langlais et Daniel Gaudreau.

So, I'm sure we shall have together a very good afternoon of work. And I ask Romeo
to go through the meeting.

70 If you want to translate first please.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

75 Thank you very much. I'd like, I guess, to introduce you people the panel, about our
community. First of all, I'd like to stress that we appreciate that you have considered to come
to our community and inform us about what is happening with regards to the water.

I say this, that we appreciate, because as you know in the past, when these sorts of
80 things are happening in a Native territory, usually they just happened. There was no
consultation.

In the past, it was experienced by the Native people that, suddenly, trees are cut
down in the territory and roads are built. And other times, mining is going on without their
85 knowledge.

I think you also remember that the hydroelectric development could have happened without our knowledge. It was about to happen. But the way we found out was that one young man by the name of Philip Awashish took a newspaper in a bus and that's how we found out the hydroelectric project.

So, I really appreciate, I think from time to time, certain people arrive at our community to inform us of projects or policies that may affect us. And I want to thank you for that, because you're being care.

Our community is composed of about 550 Cree people and we are living with the Inuit population too. I think we are equal in numbers, about 500 Inuit that are living in this community. And a few others had moved to the next community which is called Umiujaq.

Our problems in this community with regards to water are the same. Where we are affected with natural things, maybe the weather, water or destruction of the land, sewage, we are affected. Both communities are affected. I'm going to talk about that later, how the sewage and maybe water affect both communities. I think that's important for the panel to take that into consideration.

At this time, as you know, juste a few people are over there. Most of our community, probably 70 percent of our community at this time is now going in the land. It is the fall time, the geese are flying. And the people that need to spend their time to trap lines are gone too. This has been going on since last week.

Most of the people are working the Band office. This is their last day of work. They will be having holidays this for two weeks, some for three weeks, they are going out in the land.

We are very strongly still attached to the land and I just gave you example of our community that's happening right now, 70 percent are going. We are very connected to our land. That's why we opposed the hydroelectric project.

We have certain questions that we would like to ask you in relation to the northern contaminants program. Is there one for the Northern Québec? We know that in the Northwest Territories, extensive research was done in studying the water and other pollutions.

We also want to ask you about the snow quality in region 10B. Are there studies done with respect to the snow and how much does it carry pollution? We want to know about this, because for us the snow melts in the spring and it affects the water system and its quality too.

We'd like to ask about the global warming effects. We'd like to know whether this panel is taking seriously about these rumors of global warming. Two night ago, I watched the television in which a report came saying that the United Nations had released a report to the

world that talks about some certain predictions that will happen as a result of global warming.
 130 One is a drought, and water patterns change, and other effects.

When you make your policy on water, the environment, we'd like to know if you will be
 taking into consideration of the future events. I guess in this issue, if there's a future, effects
 with respect to the global warming, we want to know if we're going to have more water in the
 135 north or less water. And what is going to happen with the reservoir up in the complex in
 Chisasibi, east of Chisasibi.

We know that the rumors are going on that the dikes of that reservoir had been leaking
 when we had a storm last fall. This was due to a severe wind, but not the severe wind that we
 140 had in the past. This was a little wind comparing to, you know, the wind. So, if this is going
 to be a weather pattern in the future, we'd like to know if the dikes and dams up in La Grande
 will be holding. And we would like the Hydro-Québec to release information on studies with
 respect to that.

We'd like to ask you about our water treatment for our community, our drinking water
 145 and conservation of water quality in the community and, I guess, generally climatic changes.

You have already mentioned the long-range transport of contaminants in the north that
 are coming from the south. We may be thinking that the water is very clean at this time in the
 150 northern region, but we're also hearing that there's a pollution that travels to the Arctic and to
 the northern region.

So, these are a list of questions that we plan to ask you. And we know this is only the
 first phase of this program or hearing. We would also like to invite you to come back to our
 155 community on the second phase of this hearing so that we can be sure that we have talked
 about all that needs to be talked about with respect to the policy, the future policy on water and
 also we can be sure that you have consulted people who knows about the north and the quality
 of water. Without these consultations, you will end up assuming, writing an inadequate policy
 on water.

160 So, that's about what I wanted to say for now. I don't know what is going after this.

MR. ROMEO SAGANASH, JBACE Chairman

165 I don't know, George, if you want to translate your own words or leave it up to Lisa to
 do that. It's really up to you.

We've always taken a serious consideration to the fact that there are people in hearings
 in Cree communities that don't understand English. So, I would like them to hear what you've
 170 said in Cree as well.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

I have writing here, I can translate for the people.

MR. ROMEO SAGANASH, JBACE Chairman

Meegwetch George. So Robert, George pershaps, I have listed a whole list of questions that you would like to ask or issues that you would like to raise to this panel and to resource people that are here with us: northern contaminants program in the Northwest Territories; long-range transport of contaminants; climatic changes; dams security and dikes in Chisasibi; water treatment and water quality in this community which I think is an important issue as well.

So, perhaps you can take those questions one by one with the help of Robert and ask them directly to our resource people that are here with us.

I don't know if Mr. Co-Chair would like to add something to that.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

It's an important list of questions I think. Maybe the more simple is to start with the first one. You said something, I think, about the local problem of the community with drinkable water and sewage water.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

Yes.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

And you spoke about the fact that there are two communities here. Do you have any common services between the two communities about drinkable water or is it absolutely separated one from the other?

MR. GEORGE MASTY

Okay. Maybe I can ask Robert to address that issue.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Excuse me. He wants to have the translation before the question.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

215

Well, my name is Robert Wynne, I work for Whapmagoostui First Nation. I'm the local environment administrator for the Band and also do have other related duties.

220

I guess for the municipal part of the community, I mean the water intake, I would like to explain a little bit to the community members and also to the panel how our system works.

225

First of all, the intake system belongs to the SIQ and we're connected on their main raw waterline. And that goes directly to our pump station reservoir and we treat it with chlorine. And we've had some problems with the system because of saline in the water, salt water coming in from the intake.

I know some of you already know about it. The community members know about it.

230

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Mostly them, eh?

235

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

And I guess that one our main concerns is we have encountered this problem in the spring, sometimes in the summer months and in the fall when there's high winds.

240

Usually in the summertime, the water level in the river is low. And when there's strong winds in the summertime, I believe the salt water is on the top and the fresh water goes on the bottom of the river. Because the intake is raised and usually we have to lower it when this happens and that usually takes a couple of days to do that.

245

And I guess my question for that was, like who's going to pay or how can we resolve this problem? In other words, there's going to have to be a relocation of the intake and who's going to be doing the feasibility study of this, of relocating the intake? Because right now, it belongs to SIQ and that's Government of Québec. And I guess you can answer that somebody.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

If I may, I also want to add that the water intake that belongs to the SIQ was designed by the Army back in the 1950s. The water system as it is now was not designed, you know, for our community. It was designed for the use of the Army. So, I don't know what considerations they took at the time they built the intake.

You know, the problems that Robert is mentioning happened, I guess, the first month the intake was operating. But now this was transferred to Québec, you know.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

And also just to mention that we pay user fees for being connected on their line and it's quite high. And like we probably spend over \$100,000 every year in user fees and that's pretty high for being connected to an old system.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

How much did you say?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

Over \$100,000 a year.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

\$100,000 for the...

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

For being connected on their line.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

For the community?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

Yes, for raw sewage.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Oh! For sewage?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

I mean raw water, but sometimes it's like sewage.

MRS. LISA MASTY

We have that too.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

I think you must translate it.

MRS. LISA MASTY

I just want to add to that from the mouth of our river is one kilometer. The other way, we have raw sewage. If we can get salt water, there's no telling what else comes into our water intake.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

What?

MRS. LISA MASTY

If you go at the point...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

... one kilometer up...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

... our water intake. The other kilometer, raw sewage coming out.

335 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Up?

340 **MRS. LISA MASTY**

One kilometer north from the mouth of the river...

345 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

North, yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

... along the coast, we have raw sewage.

350 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

On the coast?

355 **MRS. LISA MASTY**

Yes, on the coast. Up river, we have one kilometer where is our water intake.

360 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

365 That's been our concern.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

370 But at least it is upriver.

MRS. LISA MASTY

But we get salt water.

375 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

But you get salt with the winds and when the water is down, it's okay. So, we'll try maybe to have a few answers.

380 Ministry of the Affaires municipales, could you explain us how it works and why is it so expensive? And do you know the problems the community is facing now?

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

385 We are aware of this problem, because it's the same for the Inuit community and we're more involved with the Inuit community.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

390 With the Cree communities, what is your relation? Is the responsibility Federal Government or are you responsible of this?

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

395 Presently, we have no responsibility with the Crees.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

400 But the water intake belongs to the SIQ?

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

The water intake belongs to the SIQ.

405 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Yes.

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

410

You said that you bought your raw water from the SIQ. Maybe it's a choice of the community, I don't know, because it might have been possible to build your own water intake in the river a little bit upward. I don't know.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

415

Well, I know the Band has talked about it, but I don't know it in detail, like how...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

420

Okay.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

425

... for that, if we're going to build our own intake.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

430

Do you have any research about the alternative solution for your water intake like wells or to change the location of the...

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

435

They just started talking about it, the location and stuff like this.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Who is talking with you?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

440

Who is?

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

445

Yes.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

450

I cannot... like I'm not involved in that right now.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

I cannot answer that. Like I would only be assuming if I did.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

But it is not Environment-Québec.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

No.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

It is the federal level in this case. And to whom do you pay \$100,000 for the water intake?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

I believe that's to SIQ.

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

Yes, it's true. It should be, because I know that SIQ, they sell raw water to your community.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

I think it should be the other way around. You're on our land. Your line is on our land, it should be free.

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

I don't understand.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

Your line is on our land, your waterline.

495 **MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS**

Okay, I understand.

500 **MR. HARM SLOTERDĪJK, JBACE Commissioner**

Mr. Chairman...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

505 Yes.

MR. HARM SLOTERDĪJK, JBACE Commissioner

510 ... I have a technical question, because something is puzzling me about the water intake and the salt water intrusion.

If I understand well, the salt water of course is coming from the Hudson Bay. And when the river water is low, so that means there's a flow upstream. You also mentioned that the sewage outfall is downstream.

515 **MR. ROBERT WYNNE**

Yes.

520 **MR. HARM SLOTERDĪJK, JBACE Commissioner**

Do you know whether any of that sewage that is coming out... is the sewage going out into the river and, if so, if there is salt water coming upriver towards the water intake, would there be maybe a danger that sewage also get to the water intake?

525 **MR. ROBERT WYNNE**

Well, for that, we test the water. Like we use the Colilert system. And sometimes we get readings of high levels of coliform in the water. And usually I send out notices to boil the water to some people not to drink it, because most people, they don't drink the water that we have coming from the pump station.

530 **MR. HARM SLOTERDĪJK, JBACE Commissioner**

535 They will drink bottled water?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

540 They either drink bottled water or the spring water from our natural springs around the community.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

545 Wait a minute. I think we must have a translation.

MR. HARM SLOTERDĪJK, JBACE Commissioner

I have one more question please.

550 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Yes.

MR. HARM SLOTERDĪJK, JBACE Commissioner

555 Near the airport, I was walking on the beach this morning and I noticed a sewage outfall. Is that a different one than what you're talking about? This was going right into...

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

560 That's the one she was talking about.

MR. HARM SLOTERDĪJK, JBACE Commissioner

565 This one is going right into the sea. You know, I was on the beach and... because you were talking about a sewage outfall into the river. So, I would like you to make a distinction between the two if there are.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

570 That's the one she was talking about, the outlet. That's where it's located for the community sewage.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

Yes, we only have one sewage outlet. That's the one by the bay. I don't know if there has been any actual studies on how the sewage travels into the river. We know that the salt water does come up. And depending on the high tides and the low tides, the current travels either direction. So, we don't have the expertise or the money to conduct these studies.

And also there's something else that I think perhaps Environment-Québec should or the SIQ should look into. It's that the Inuit community use septic tanks and the wastewater is taken out and dumped just in our dumpsite. So, we don't know how this raw sewage being dumped travels underground.

As Robert mentioned, our elders don't really drink the water from the tub. They never have before, because they could taste the chlorine that's in there. They are more sensitive, our elders are more sensitive to the quality of water, whereas for me, living in Montreal for five years, I consider this tap water here very good, you know, when I compare to the tap water of Montreal.

And I think if you spend a half a day here, if you were to spend a half a day here, you would see people driving with their four-wheelers getting water from the underground source.

So, taken into consideration that we want to... somebody has to be concerned how the dumping of sewage at that dump travels and affects the underwater source.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

I can ask you the question and also to Mrs. Brazeau, do you have many advices in the year asking the people to boil their water because of bacteriological pollution?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

I believe it was only once or twice in the spring. But I also do some test on one of the spring water, I do test on the spring water for bacteria in the water, and I noticed that at one of our springs it was contaminated.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

These springs belong to the community, are they used for your municipal drinking water or the individuals go by themselves to...

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

615

Well, those springs are close to the community and then...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

620

Yes.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

625

... anybody goes there that wants...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Anybody?

630

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

... to drink spring water and take it to their house. And the Inuit go there too.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

635

Okay, good.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

640

So, I notified them that the spring water is no good when...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

It is polluted also sometimes?

645

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

Polluted or contaminated and then I just issue a boiling water notice.

650

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

And it's up to the individual.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes. Mrs. Brazeau, do you know this contamination also of the source, of the spring?

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

Yes. Robert sends me the results regularly and he also sends me the results of the springs, although he is not obliged to do so. They have the material to do their own analysis...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes.

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

... and they use is to analyze the water from the springs. So, it's a good thing.

I noticed that the source, one of them I think, it happened a couple of times, but the contamination was quite low, but it showed some contamination, yes, coliform, no fecal but only total coliform.

And for the municipal water, it showed, I think it was twice this year, some contamination. So, yes, I'm aware of this.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Would you do the translation please?

MR. JACQUES LEFÈBVRE, CCEBJ Commissioner

I have a question. What is the distance between the raw sewage dump from the Inuit community and the sources where people go to get their drinking water? Is it very far apart or is it close?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

Probably maybe a kilometer or 1.5 kilometer from the spring water. What I'm talking about is going up the hill and where they dump their raw sewage is downhill. So, I don't think it's coming from... it would be near the airport, but north of the airport. So, I don't think that it

affects that groundwater from that source, because we've installed monitoring wells in that location and I don't think... we didn't get any results or nothing. We didn't get anything. Does that answer your question?

700

MR. JACQUES LEFÈBVRE, CCEBJ Commissioner

Yes, sir.

705

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

If you need a study about a new location for your water intake, you must make a request to the Federal Government, I think. Is that right?

710

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

I would think so.

715

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

720

That's where the money comes from.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

And you didn't ask at this moment?

725

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

I don't know. Like I'm not on...

730

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

You don't know, okay.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

735

... the Band Council.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

740 Because we invited people from...

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

745 You would have to ask that to George.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

750 ... Ministry of Indian Affairs, they were not able to come to this meeting, but we can ask them a few questions by fax if we want. So, we will make a few researches on that question.

755 Because it's so surprising. We went in the Inuit community two weeks before and they told us very similar problems you have. Did you have any conversation or discussion between the two communities about a common solution on these two topics, drinking water and sewage?

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

760 I don't know if there has been any joint meetings. Like on my part, for what I know, like for the Band, I've never been into any joint meetings with the Inuit.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

765 Okay.

MRS. LISA MASTY

It's got me confused under jurisdiction here. Drinking water is a federal jurisdiction.

770 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

In your community, yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

775 In our community?

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

780 Yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

785 Inuit is provincial.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes.

790 **MRS. LISA MASTY**

So this explains why water intakes were an afterthought in the Hydro-Québec proposal to dam our river. Anyway!

795 **MR. ROMEO SAGANASH, JBACE Chairman**

It depends if the water intake is on category 3 then. Then, that's another issue.

MRS. LISA MASTY

800 Yes.

MR. ROMEO SAGANASH, JBACE Chairman

805 Right?

MRS. LISA MASTY

810 Then we use Robert's site.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

815 You see, it's not in vain we are speaking about that, because it's the kind of things we can signal.

MRS. LISA MASTY (For Mr. George Snowboy)

820 Mr. Snowboy is 87 years old, he comes from Chisasibi. He's visiting here, he's visiting his grandson that's living here with us.

As he stated earlier, he's from Chisasibi and he says every night, when he goes to bed, he fears of being drown by the reservoir that's east of his community. And it's a fear he goes to bed with each night and it has become their reality since they've seen the dams that have taken place in their territory.

And he maintains that it is the dominant society who has killed our river, he says, the Chisasibi River. And he says that a long time ago, when they came inland from their trap lines, there was a tradition amongst the people when the came inland to take a cup of water and to drink from the river. And it was a tradition that they can no longer follow because that river has been killed, as he claims.

And he says when he was growing up, he lived off the land and it not until later age when he met people from other races. And he says he took this time to address you because of the situation in his community, but also because he felt that he had to because of his role as an elder. And he says very few people here are older than he is, which is quite true.

And he also maintains that he speaks as a visitor to this land, even though he comes just within the Cree territory but from this other community of Whapmagoostui. Again there is a teaching there also. I leave that with you.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Thank you very much for your communication. I think we can take a five or ten-minute break and we come back with other questions. Thank you.

(SUSPENSION OF THE HEARING)

(CONTINUATION OF THE HEARING)

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

I don't want to spend all the afternoon on this question about the drinkable water in the community, but I think a few more questions are necessary.

I would ask to the Ministry of the Municipal Affairs, do you have any study about the problem of the drinkable water and sewage water in the community of Kuujjuarapik related also to the same question for the community of Whapmagoostui?

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

To your exact question, I must say that we don't have any studies.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

865 You don't have any studies on that now?

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

870 About the quality of the water.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Not only on the quality of the water, but about the solution, the possible solution to different problems, notably the salinization of the drinkable water.

875

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

880 Many studies have been made in the past by Hydro-Québec. It was while the project Grande Baleine was ongoing and there were many solutions at that time for replacement of the water intake of the community at that time. I think there was two or three possibilities. We have such copies of those documents at our office.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

885 Yes, but these studies are about another project.

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

890 Yes.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

But in the actual situation of the river...

895 **MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS**

No.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

900

... you don't?

MR. ROBERT LANGLAIS

905 The only studies for a solution that we have already are those documents that are still at our office.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

910 Mr. Fournier, if I do understand, the SIQ is acting as a distributor of drinkable water. It takes the water from the river, it puts it in a system, which system gives water to the allochtone community, to the Cree community and to the Inuit community. They sell this water at, it seems, high prices.

915 I want to know, with the by-laws of the Ministry of the Environment, is SIQ responsible of the quality of the water they are selling to the three communities?

MR. GUY FOURNIER

920 You're so right, Mr. Chairman. In the regulation of drinking water, we have an article that says that an owner of a distribution of water, that sells water to people, he can charge a certain amount that the Minister gives the... how do you say that in French... it's him that fixes the price.

925 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

 The prices, yes.

MR. GUY FOURNIER

930 And he has the responsibility to distribute water quality after treatment. And it's the owner of the system or the network that is responsible.

MRS. GISÈLE GALLICHAN, BAPE Commissioner

935 Mr. Fournier, you said SIQ was responsible for the quality, but you added «after treatment».

MR. GUY FOURNIER

940 Yes.

MRS. GISÈLE GALLICHAN, BAPE Commissioner

945 So, must we suppose that here water has a treatment, I think, by chlorination? And
as you said, Mr. Wynne, that this was contaminated water more often than... either in a year.
How is it that, after treatment with chlorination, there is still contamination?

MR. GUY FOURNIER

950 I'll let Mrs. Brazeau answer that part of the question please.

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

955 It's sure after the treatment, it could have some problems after treatment, the
distribution of the water, the temperature of the water, it could happen that coliforms are
forming in the network even though the water is treated.

960 But I just want to clarify that both SIQ and the Cree community have their own
treatment system. The Crees are buying raw water, so they have their own chlorination
system and the water is distributed into the Cree community. And the SIQ has its own water
treatment and the water is distributed to the Inuit and to the non-Native part of the community.

MRS. GISÈLE GALLICHAN, BAPE Commissioner

965 So, what Mr. Beauchamp has said a few minutes ago is not applicable here on the
Cree community. Do I understand well what you say? So, SIQ is not responsible here for the
quality of water?

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

970 That's about it.

MRS. GISÈLE GALLICHAN, BAPE Commissioner

975 Okay.

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

980 They're responsible for the water that they distribute to their consumers.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

985 Yes, but they sell water to the Cree community.

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

Raw water before treatment.

990 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

How can you charge people when you sell «raw water»?

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

995

That, I don't know. I will have to check in the regulation, but the owner of the intake is the SIQ. The SIQ is also the owner of the pumping station. And the Cree have their own network plugged into the pumping station of the SIQ. That must be why they are charging the Cree some fees for the water.

1000

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

1005

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

But for the quality of the water distributed to each consumer, it would be the responsibility of the Crees, because they have their own treatment system.

1010

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

MRS. LISA MASTY

1015

Okay. I'll translate first and I have question.

Within the regulation, within the by-law which outlines the regulation for distributors on... well, you discussed about a fixed rate, are there two different rates, one for selling treated water and one for raw water? Where are the prices coming from which total to \$100,000?

1020

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

1025

I don't know.

MRS. LISA MASTY

So, why are we paying?

1030

MRS. JOSÉE BRAZEAU

It's the same question, I don't know. There must be something in the regulation that says... because don't forget that they are the owner of the water intake and the pumping station. So, there must be something in the regulation that allows them to charge a fee for someone who comes and plugs their own distribution system into their pumping station. There must be something. I don't know which articles or how it is written, but there must be something, because they are charging.

1035

1040

For the rate, I cannot answer you, because I'm not the one who...

MRS. LISA MASTY

We're all assuming here. So, maybe we could get some questions the next time around and have them... because it is very important. It's not to put you on the spot, we know that you don't have the rates. But it is important for the community to know why we are paying what we are paying.

1045

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1050

Yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

1055

And it's not to put you on the spot here. So, don't get defensive.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay. I don't want to go too far away in this question, but a few remarks. Naturally, we don't know if there is a contract between the Cree community and the SIQ. We will make a few more researches on the federal level. I will ask Pierre Dugas to ask for the Commission more questions on the federal level and also to the SIQ to understand precisely the responsibilities of each of the parties. So, I'll give some information on this field.

1060

1065

As a rule in the regulation, the price of selling water, but I don't know if it is drinkable water or raw water, there is a point we don't know now for the regulation. As a rule, if there is a contest of the price of the water, it is the authority of the Deputy Minister of the Environment to state the right price of the water. And if there is a contestation, it goes to the Municipal Court. But it's quite technical, we shall see later on.

1070

My second remark is, for an outsider, it seems that it is important to have a working group on that to put together the different parties and to try to understand what is the specific question between these islands of jurisdiction, and stress and conflicts, and what are the solutions to this kind of problem. And I think it's an important one.

1075

You did ask many questions. Before we go through the questions you asked, maybe I can invite people from the community if they want to ask questions. If there are, we will receive the questions of the community; otherwise, we will go on with the questions you asked before.

1080

MRS. LISA MASTY (For Mr. Andrew Kawapit)

For the record, his name is Andrew Kawapit. He's an elder on the Whapmagoostui First Nation Council. He's the elder representative.

1085

In his statement, Andrew maintains that water is very important to all forms of life, not just to the human race. And in his life, he has seen the climatic changes that have take place and the changes of the way of life for both the human race and also for all kind of life, animal life and...

1090

And he says that we can't all blame this on the dominant society, but rather it has been known and foretold in the past. These things that are here today, they have been predicted by our people, our ancestors and these predictions have been passed on that these changes that we see today will take place. And the blame is not to be put on the shoulder of one society or one race.

1095

He says that the changes that we see today again is felt by all sorts of life. And the changes are both positive and negative. And these changes we see on the earth, on the sky, in the land, in the water.

1100

And water is a very important source of life. It is a life-giving force. And it is an important task that we are faced with today and it's good to see different people with different knowledge coming here to share the knowledge. And also it is important to work together to find a solution. It's not just for us today, but for future generations, not just for our race, but also for the other life around us, all forms of life.

1105

And he was very glad to see the young boys that were with us this afternoon and I believe there is still some outside. And these young boys, they represent future leadership. These young people, they represent future leadership. And the decisions that we make today will be felt by the future generations. And the changes that we don't make, that we should make, they'll also feel those too.

1110

And he addressed the community in urging them to share with everybody here the Cree knowledge, the Cree wisdom when it comes to our land because they've walked the land.
 1115 They've lived of the land for many years and many generations. And the knowledge that they have today is not their own but rather that was knowledge that was shared for many generations. And it's in marrying the two types of knowledge that we can find solutions for tomorrow and not just for today, not short-term solutions but rather long-term solutions, and underlying that work with mutual respect of the two types of knowledge.

1120 And he claims that the river that we fought so hard to save is also feeling the changes. And he has seen that it is drying up. When they were growing up, they were able to swim, but now it's dry. He referred to a certain area near the Cree dock. I don't know if you've been there, but it's... They were able to swim there and also they were able to... as young boys when
 1125 they were swimming, they'd take the fish of the nets and take them home to the people if they knew who the fish belonged to. Like there was that much water that you could put up nets and the fish were able to come in.

So, even the river is drying up. The water level has gone down. And inland, the lakes
 1130 are also drying up. And he says even if it rains more, like the more it rains, the more dryer it is. And we need to find out why this is happening.

And again he closed his statement by urging people to work together for solutions for future generations and, in the future, hopes that whatever work is being done in different
 1135 areas which affect our community and our nation, that we will be informed and that we will be asked to contribute, because every contribution is just as important, whether it's technical or otherwise.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1140 Thank you very much, Andrew. Thank you.

Is there another person in the community who wants to ask a question? Yes, sir, sit
 1145 there at the table.

MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM

Good afternoon.

1150 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Good afternoon, sir.

1155 **MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM**

My name is Gary Petagumskum. I also work for the Whapmagoostui First Nation.

1160 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Okay.

1165 **MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM**

I'm the local youth coordinator. Just to point out something, I haven't been here all afternoon, I only got here after two o'clock. Before we had running water here, we had the same housing system as the Inuit our neighbors. Like everything was as one.

1170 Then, if I can remember right, back in 1984, I was only 14 at that time, that's when we had the kind of housing that we have right now. And I didn't know until today that we were paying a lump sum towards running water, a water that I don't drink. I only use it to do my laundry and shower, that's about it. And sometime you can't even do that because there's too much... sometimes there was sand and mud that was coming through the running water. So, when people like... within my generation, a lot of people don't even drink the water that we pay.

1175 And even where we generate our water from, from the SIQ, that's like a... what do you call it? There's a lot of canoes and motors. Even kids go swim in there. So, it's very unsafe and I'm quite surprised on the amount that they distributed towards SIQ. And I don't want to put anybody on the spot here. Like if I were to pay that lump sum towards something, I want that thing to work for me.

1180 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Yes.

1185 **MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM**

1190 And for now, I'm not impressed at all. I have to get my own drinking water. And you know, like maybe there was some sort of document or contract that was signed between the Whapmagoostui First Nation and the SIQ since the pipe was going to be diverted into the reserve. Even the old houses were demolished on the lake. We only had like one stretch of road and that's where all the Cree houses were. And the other side was the Inuit.

1195 And when we got the new housing agreement, I guess, we had running water. And maybe the Inuit, and the Cree, and the governments can work together to provide a better solution for everybody. So, the water, I would call it... it's raw, very raw. And I'm quite surprised on what I heard today. This is something I never knew. Thank you.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1200 So, it's a good thing if you learn new things about the information on this issue. You don't drink the water of the municipality?

MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM

1205 I don't.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1210 Even if, as a rule, the tests seem to indicate that it is good water?

MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM

You can drink it, I won't.

1215 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

You won't.

MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM

1220 You know, just use common sense, what are the things that you... there's two things you ask yourself every day when you go to bed or when you wake up, you want to drink something.

1225 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Yes.

MR. GARY PETAGUMSKUM

1230

And when you go to bed, you want to drink something as well, or even in the middle of the night. So, it's water that we need today and will always need. Without it, we can't survive. Thank you.

1235

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay. Thanks, sir.

MRS. LISA MASTY, (For Mr. Gilbert Dick)

1240

Gilbert has questions within questions. So, I'll see if I can keep this straight.

1245

For the record, his name is Gilbert Dick. And in Cree the translation for Great Whale, as you all know, is Whapmagoostui. And why Whapmagoostui? It's called Whapmagoostui because the whales used to come up here. And now with all the changes that have taken place, they can no longer do that, both changes environmentally, and socially, and our lifestyles. We now use boats, motors and oil, gas and oil coming out from the motors that we use to travel.

1250

And he says that the number of fish in the river has gone down. And we know this, because we no longer can catch as many as we used to. And our lifestyles as Crees has changed to a point where we scare off Indoho. Indoho is the animals, it's the animals both in the wander and which walk the land. We have scared them off with our lifestyle and this is a lifestyle that we have chosen ourselves.

1255

But he talks about all the sources of pollution that come from the community. And he names the Hydro-Québec, these old generators as a source of community pollutions. We see black smoke go straight up specially in winter, because we can see it more in the cold and, he says, all around.

1260

Andrew is older than him and when Andrew was young, they were still able... like as he said, they were still able to swim near the Cree dock. But when he was Andrew's age, it was shallow. But now his son, with his son, it's totally dry. So, that's three generations where the level of water has gone down. And it's a lake. It was quite a shallow lake to start off with.

1265

And he goes into the level of the river itself. And he says that the water level has gone dramatically down and especially more so since the LA-1, LA-2 dams, the dams of the Caniapiscaw River. And although Whapmagoostui was told that there were no impacts, the community feels that the level has gone down as a result of this project.

1270

And he talks about the routes they used to take to go up river. And he says instead of two, three routes that he used to take, channels, now there's only one, because the other areas have dried up. I think it's the north side of the river, but the south side has dried up where they can no longer go up there.

1275

And he also talked about the work he did in Lake Bienville in 1971 when studies were being done. Environmental studies were carried out by Hydro-Québec. And in 1971, he talks about a campsite where the planes used to land bringing in equipment and bringing whatever else they needed.

1280

But just recently, within the CTA, they were given cabins, cabins to put up along the trap lines. And in the same area, from 1971 to 1995, the lake level has dropped so dramatically that the plane was no longer able to land in the same area. So, he compares the level of a shallow lake to the size of Lake Bienville and the job that took place. And one was three generations shallower and the other one is Lake Bienville. We all know how big it is. And the level drop was so dramatic where they couldn't no longer go near the same site where they had landed in 1971. And he'd like to find out why this is happening.

1285

And the other question he had was in regards to... he had two questions, and one was on the river and one was on the lake, Lake Bienville.

1290

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Thank you very much.

1295

Do you have any information about this phenomena? The question is about Lac Bienville and the change of the level of the rivers.

MR. DANIEL BERROUARD

1300

Lac Bienville is not in the same watershed of the La Grande. So...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1305

Grande Baleine.

MR. DANIEL BERROUARD

Yes, it is in the system of Grande Rivière de la Baleine.

1310

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes.

1315 **MR. DANIEL BERROUARD**

So, in principle, there is no link between... with, for example, the La Grande complex. It seems to be a natural fluctuation.

1320 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Could you repeat the question please? The question you asked, would you...

MRS. LISA MASTY

1325

He wanted to know... he had two questions.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1330 Two questions, yes.

MRS. LISA MASTY

Yes. One was on the lake and one is on the river.

1335

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes.

1340 **MRS. LISA MASTY**

Lac Bienville, okay?

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1345

One is on the Lake Bienville?

MRS. LISA MASTY

1350 Yes, Lake Bienville.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

1355

MRS. LISA MASTY

And he's noticed on the Lake Bienville, the water level has gone down and also on the Great Whale River. And they've seen the drop more so since within the past 10 years.

1360

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

The level of the Lac Bienville dropped?

1365

MRS. LISA MASTY

Yes. And also the river itself here, the Great Whale River.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1370

So, it's the same question.

MRS. LISA MASTY

It is, but there's, I believe, other streams that go into the Great Whale River itself.

1375

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

1380

MRS. LISA MASTY

So, it's not just the source, but also the streams that flow into the river.

1385

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes, okay.

MRS. LISA MASTY

1390

So, we know our river.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1395 Do you observe, Hydro-Québec, do you observe a drying of the rivers? And what are
the cause for that here, the observation of the dropping of the Lac Bienville and the drying of
the rivers?

MR. VINCENT SIOUI

1400 Yes. I don't have any remarks specifically on Lac Bienville, but the statistics indicate
that since 10 years, the precipitations are around 30 percent less than before. And so, I know
that in all the north, maybe the south also, the levels of all the rivers, since 10 years, went
lower than it used to be.

1405 Probably that it could be related to the greenhouse effect or global warming, nobody
knows. But this summer, the rain was about the normal average as it used to be before. But it
was 10 years with really low precipitations of rain.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1410 Do you have at Hydro-Québec any report on the climate change? It's related also to the
question asked by the community, they were asking if the global change is making more
water... si les pluies progressent, do you have any «planification» about the security and the
1415 dikes and the dams with the climatic change? Do you have any prevision, if the climate
change is confirmed and if we receive more water here, of the impact of that on your dams
and your dikes?

MR. VINCENT SIOUI

1420 Hydro-Québec has no works around here on the Grande Baleine River, on this
watershed. Hydro-Québec has nothing, has never made any work here. But for the works that
Hydro-Québec has, there are emergency plans for everywhere. Does it answer?

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1425 Do you have any study, Hydro-Québec, on the climate change itself?

MR. VINCENT SIOUI

1430 No, I don't think so. I know that there are some reports made by the United Nations...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1435 Yes.

MR. VINCENT SIOUI

1440 ... Commission on sustainable...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes, we do have that, yes.

1445 **MR. VINCENT SIOUI**

Yes. And those reports talk about serious, really serious change on climate. But I don't think that Hydro-Québec has studies on climate change over the world.

1450 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

No, but you don't have any study about the climate change, the raining pattern changing and the effect of that on your equipments already on the territory, not on this part, but on the other part where you have dams and installations?

1455 **MR. VINCENT SIOUI**

I don't think so, but I could...

1460 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Could you check that please?

1465 **MR. VINCENT SIOUI**

I could check that and answer you soon.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1470 On the side of the Ministry of the Environment, what are your comments on the hypothesis of climate change related to the level of rain? If the climate change is confirmed, do you know if the model predicts more rain here or less rain, drying, or the contrary?

MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE

1475

No, we don't have any comments on this.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1480

You don't have.

Would you precise the question you asked about the snow in the 10B region? You asked us if there is a study on that. Do you know if a study exists on that or you're asking if there is a study on the snow in the 10B? And what is the purpose of the question?

1485

MR. GEORGE MASTY

1490

I guess the question... I don't know, maybe someone else can ask, but for me, when I mentioned in the list I presented at the beginning... I understand this is a meeting that concerns the quality and the quantity of water. So, I just wanted to emphasize that the snow, the contents of the snow or contaminants in the snow does effect the quality of water.

1495

Now, I am not a scientist and I would assume that if Québec is concerned the water quality and plans to develop a policy and a management of the water, I would assume that they must be aware that the pollutions in the north do arrive here. These pollutions are from the south. And the side effect studies had shown already in the Northwest Territories.

1500

And so I guess the question will have to come from people who know about, you know, the snow study. I don't know what you want to call it. I guess my question is, is there a study being done, or if there has been a study before, or if they are planning of a study that would measure the contaminants in the snow, so that we can decide what is actually the quality of water in the springtime and what is the trend. Is the snow getting better or is it getting worse, you know? So, maybe you can...

1505

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

And if you ask it for the snow, you ask it also for the rain?

MR. GEORGE MASTY

1510

Of course, yes.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1515

Naturally.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

Yes.

1520

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay. It was the word «snow» that...

1525

MR. GEORGE MASTY

Yes.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1530

... why specifically the snow or the rain, because as a rule, the rain has been examined quite deeply.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

1535

Yes.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1540

Mr. Fournier?

MR. GUY FOURNIER

1545

Unfortunately, we don't have today an expert of that, on air quality. But I can say, in Québec we have some people that have expertise on that topic. So, we'll see them, ask them some questions, if they have data, study or information principally concerning «frontalier» transportation of pollutants that maybe come from the United States, other provinces and other countries.

1550

I know that some people in the ministry, they have some committee with other provinces and the United States, that looks about that topic. So, we'll ask them if they have information.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1555

Yes. It's a question we debated a lot in other sessions, you see, in the hearings we are holding since the 15th of March. So, we had a lot of discussions on these topics, about the pollution coming from the south, from acid rain and from the climate change.

1560

We will be obliged to speak about that in our report, because it is related to the global change. So, if all the situation is changing, if the level of rain is changing, if the pollutants are posing new stresses on the water quantity and quality, it's important to integrate that in our policy. So, we are more insecure. And the situation is changing, so we must take it in the way we are building our policy on water.

1565

It's a terrible question, a very big question. There is a lot of scientific data. We will be obliged to speak about that. We are not experts, we cannot make new research, but we can make the point on the research already done. And it will be included in our report, okay?

1570

All the questions you asked I think are very important ones. We see that we don't have today the specific experts to answer now to the questions. What we can do, we can make a short survey of the documentation already given in the consultation and indicate to the... excuse me, when I'm tired, I'm losing all the things, to the Consultative Environmental James Bay Committee the source we have and the documentation we have and take note of that.

1575

Would you agree that, for this afternoon, we can close or do you have any... Excuse me, you have. All right.

MR. JACQUES LEFÈBVRE, CCEBJ Commissioner

1580

There was a question that you asked earlier about seepage, probably because you were on your trap lines and your trap lines are close to the dams, I guess, or the... you talked about dominant winds that were coming toward the dikes and water was going through the dikes. Were you talking about this earlier on?

1585

MR. GEORGE MASTY

1590

Well, we don't know the exact events, but we only learn it through the publication of the Nation. We don't know if that report in there was... you know, to what degree it is accurate. But there is also, I sensed at the time that I was reading the article that Hydro-Québec might be not very... or maybe reluctant to speak about what it finds wrong with dikes or dams. And this raised, you know, more questions for the people, I guess, in Chisasibi and also for us, because the other question that I have here, it regards to the projects, you know, Hydro-Québec developments.

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You know, maybe I don't need to ask a specific question at this time, but I just wanted to give you something that you should take with you so that you have a sense of what our concerns are.

1600 The Hydro-Québec development, you know, is on the shelf, we all know that. Now, at the same time we're hearing problems with the dikes and dams over there in Chisasibi, east of Chisasibi. So, we just have more questions, you know. I don't expect an answer at this time. So, we just wanted to let you know that if there's a future development or talk of development in the community with regards to Great Whale River, we are very concerned.

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MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Yes.

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MR. GEORGE MASTY

We have many questions, even more than back in 1975. So, any development with the projects...

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MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

We are sure about that.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

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We want to be consulted, you know.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

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Yes.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

So, that, you don't have to answer that. We just let you know that.

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MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay.

1635 **MR. GEORGE MASTY**

I don't know, Mr. Chairman, what your plans are. I'm sure you took some notes, but I do have one more question that I think...

1640 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Yes.

1645 **MR. GEORGE MASTY**

... was important.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1650 Yes. Go on. It's so far away, we don't come here so often, you know. Ask the question.

MR. GEORGE MASTY

1655 Okay. This has to do with the... we had an event, I guess, last fall in one of the major lakes up north, Minto Lake. And in the fall, I guess what happened was that there were caribou drowning in the lake. Nobody knew about this until in the spring when one of our hunters travelled there and saw caribou frozen on the surface. And we later found out that, I guess, Québec Environment or somebody from Hydro-Québec, officers went there and
1660 counted about 500 animals on the lake frozen.

We contacted the people from the next community Umiujaq and, I guess, in the spring they wanted to find out what do we do about it. I understand the mayor of that community had a hard time going through the Québec Environment. So, he had to take a plane and knock on
1665 the door of your government. And luckily assistance was provided to take the carcasses of the caribou out of the water.

So, we know that the drowning of a caribou had happened, I think, in the Caniapiscou River way back. The event that happened in October is a major event for us, because we
1670 depended on the caribou. And also now we question whether that lake is contaminated. And if it's contaminated, how much is it contaminated.

So, our question is, I guess, if it happened again in the future, next year, or within two years, or even this fall, if we find a caribou drowning in the river or in the lake, who do we
1675 approach within the government departments for the clean up? And I guess when we are concerned of carcasses, who do we go to?

1680 It seems that if the mayor of Umiujaq didn't take the plane, these caribou, 500 caribou, would be still floating in one of our major lakes. So, when we talk about quality of water, should we be concerned about that when these events take place?

MRS. LISA MASTY (for George Snowboy)

1685 When he was hunting as a young man, he never saw a caribou because he hunted inland. And with the projects, everything, the migration of the caribou has changed. So, we shouldn't be surprised when we know of caribou drowning within the territory, because we have altered their traditional routes.

1690 And he says that, as he told us earlier, he's 87 years old, but never saw a caribou until he was... never killed a caribou till was he was 70. And it's through the changes that we imposed on the territory that has altered the routes and the traditional routes taken by the caribou.

1695 And Margaret talked about the periods of starvation that they faced with they were young.

MR. ROMEO SAGANASH, JBACE Chairman

1700 Before we go into the translation of what our elder just said, I just want to hear the response from the Ministry of the Environment on the question that George has asked with respect to the incident that happened in Minto, Minto Lake. And if such an incident happens in the future, on which door will the Cree or the Inuit be able to knock so that we can get a faster response than in this particular case? Does the Environment have an answer to that?

1705 **MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE**

1710 Yes, you referred to a natural event that occurred probably last fall. And when we heard about it from... I don't know exactly who, but someone from Umiujaq, we sent a biologist to inspect, to observe the situation. And by the same time, the KRC wrote a letter to our minister to inform him of this event. And we decided to help the KRC to clean out the carcasses from the lake and to put them on the shore.

1715 So, if another event like this occurs in the future, you can refer to the regional office from Northern Québec or Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Northern Québec are responsible for the wildlife resource aspect and the Abitibi-Témiscamingue is responsible for environmental emergencies.

1720 So, if you have another event of this kind, that is a natural event, you could inform us and make a request, if necessary, to both these regional offices.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Mr. Dufresne, when you did your inquiry, you asked a biologist to make an analysis?

1725 **MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE**

No. We asked a biologist to inspect the situation...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

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Yes.

MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE

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... to examine what could be the cause of this event. And all we do is to observe that it was important to intervene to clean the lake and...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

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Yes, but I'm not speaking about the cleaning, I'm speaking about the cause. You told us it's a natural cause.

MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE

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Yes.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

It's an opinion of an expert?

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MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE

Yes.

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MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

This expert made a report, I think?

MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE

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Yes.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

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He made a written report. Could you give this report to the Commission please?

MR. JOCELIN DUFRESNE

Yes.

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MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay, thanks.

Yes, sir.

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MR. ROBERT WYNNE

Well, we had a lot of questions for you guys, but I don't think we'll be able to go through them all. And I wanted to give you what we have to the Commission...

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MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Okay, yes.

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MR. ROBERT WYNNE

... to, I guess, look over them and...

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

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Yes, it's important.

MR. ROBERT WYNNE

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... give you I guess our concerns from the community.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

Absolutely.

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MR. ROBERT WYNNE

Issues that we cannot bring up today.

1805 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Okay.

1810 **MRS. LISA MASTY**

Before I translate what our elder Philip Natachequah had said, I would like to translate what Margaret, Margaret in the back there, had talked about, what she brought to this hearing. She talked about the period of starvation that they faced as children and the teaching that came with that, that those that disrespect life will ultimately feel the impacts. And she
1815 feels that the disrespect that was shown to the caribou and to the rivers that flow in our territory, to the lakes in our territory, to all form of life that is in our territory, we are feeling those impacts now today, both as Crees and both as whoever we represent, where we work from, that that circular form of life, when it's disrespected, always comes back. That's why we are concerned about the future...

1820 **MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman**

Yes.

1825 **MRS. LISA MASTY, Interpreter**

... about the quality of water, because it's water that were used to destroy life when those projects were put up.

1830 So, she talked about the caribou and how... because in the Cree society, the caribou is held to be of the highest regard. And when it's disrespected, you disrespect life and all that flows from it. The same thing with water.

1835 And our elder Philip who's having fun in the back here, see, he goes from very serious to very humorous. So, he talks about... I don't know where he began. I'm sorry, I didn't number them. Okay. Philip, he talked about the caribou hunting activity that takes place in the northern part of our territory which is about 118, 116 kilometers from here. And in this activity, the caribou again is disrespected, because not all parts of the animal is taken and just bits and pieces of the caribou is taken from those that participate in this activity.

1840 And he talked about the life loss of animal life and the enormous life loss that takes place when projects are put up or when acts of God take place amongst the rivers and within the reservoirs when the levels change.

1845 And he says that there are many events within our territory that we have not shared with many people. These are events that take place on different trap lines. There could be a whole commission on the activities that take place within the trap lines, about hunters coming in and disrespecting life and dumping barrels, Hydro-Québec dumping barrels and used oil, used oil dumped in old hydro sites and even among the other trap lines within our territory. And
1850 the work of that commission would be quite enormous and would take a lot of work, but yet it has never happened.

And we could say a lot about what takes place in and on our territory. And a lot of it would talk about the destruction of life, of animal life and also the contamination of water,
1855 drinking water, and the lakes, and the rivers.

And he talked about... he was quite upset with the activities actually that take place around the trap lines and felt that there should be a commission just based on those activities. And it was within the past two decades that we have felt and seen the drowning of caribou.
1860 Like when 10,000 caribou drowned, it was still an act of God, but yet it was Hydro-Québec that destroyed the migration route of the caribou and that was not an act of God.

So, where do we draw the line? When do we take responsibility of our own actions as human race? Not just as Cree or non-Native, whatever race we are from. The responsibilities
1865 are all ours and not just the fault of one society. So, he talked about the responsibility that we have to future generations and that's not a responsibility that should be taken lightly. So, that's what he said.

MR. ANDRÉ BEAUCHAMP, BAPE Chairman

1870 Thank you. I wish to thank everyone present here for your comments, for your questions. I think that the water policy facing the year 2000 is a very important thing.

We do have different practices related to the water. We don't have a global approach
1875 and an integrated understand of the water as a living resource and as a manageable resource for drinking, and so on, for the human uses.

Your traditions, your values, your convictions are quite important and it's part of our sharing together.
1880

We worked in three communities since three days. I wish to thank you for being here today. The Commission is working hard and we will be in the second part of the hearings at the end of September. So, you will be invited to submit a brief to the Commission. We will go in Radisson in October, but it will be possible for you to send us a brief, a written brief. Even
1885 if you cannot present it personally to the Commission, it would be important to the Commission to receive your opinion and your briefs. It would be also possible for you if some of you come

in Montreal, we will have hearings in Montreal, and it would be possible to receive briefs from you in Montreal or in Québec City.

1890 We are supposed to give our report on March the 15th, 2000. It's a wonderful work we are doing. We hope that the confidence you give us will be respected, will be integrated.

 I wish you the best. And I think that even if the day by day life is not the same, even if we are in different kind of work, I think we are facing common problems and a common future.
1895 And I wish to thank you very deeply.

 I wish to thank also Romeo for his collaboration and I ask him to close the meeting.

MRS. LISA MASTY

1900 When Romeo addressed the community, he wanted the community to convey some of the reasons why we took such a strong stand as a community in relation to the proposed project and to summon up its life, the life that comes from the waters that flow within our territory.

1905 And from that, we have our way of life, the concept of Indoho which is all encompassing, which is the way we live our lives, take our roles, our gender rolls, and where we achieve that balance between the two genders, and where we sometimes do get lost.

1910 And this is why this Commission has such an enormous task to live up to and to uphold with the expectations that live-giving force that's in all water be respected and policies reflect that respect that should be there and that we have lost through. Like just the concept of management, can you truly really manage anything that was not ours to manage in the first place? Because it was natural. Can we manage air, this pocket of air?

1915 And that shows how arrogant we have become as a society, not just us, as Quebecers, as Canadians, but as a human race. Irregardless of which race we come from, we all have become very arrogant. And it's to humble ourselves, we will all be humbled when all water that flows in our territory is destroyed and we can no longer drink it, and bottled water will run out if we don't respect this. And we're not talking about within the next 10 years. Within
1920 the next 100 years, how much water will still be good enough for our grandchildren to drink? And how much water can we afford to destroy?

 We still hear of projects in the future, Eastmain River, Broadback. And to the south, there are other projects. And it's all going to affect everybody. No matter if you live along the
1925 Lac St. Jean area, we were all affected too when we saw the homes destroyed.

 It was an elder that has foretold the ice that fell from the sky last year. And our children talked about it before it came down. So, that spiritual connection that's there with the water is

1930 very strong. And for many years, we have disrespected that, because we rely on our scientific data. You rely on reports that claim it's an act of God. We rely on... because we try to justify, it's within our nature to justify our actions for what we have destroyed. But we can't afford to do that anymore.

1935 And there are certain issues that we feel direct impact. Like within our community, starting from my community, like paying the \$100,000 for mud that flows through our pipes, it angers us, because we have to bath our babies in that water. And if we don't take action in the future, who knows how much water that flows out from those pipes will be of that quality.

1940 So, I'm sorry if I did disrespect you, but it was not directed at you, but rather who you work for, the polices that guide your work.

And within Hydro-Québec, it was never the person that sits in front of us, it's what they do to the land. And what we have as Native people, as Quebecers, as whoever, as human
1945 people, as the human race, we have the responsibility to protect our children, our water and everything, all life. It's not just for Native people to protect, it's everybody's responsibility.

And the policies that we adopt have to keep that in mind. It's very easy just to apply a policy and to forget the heart. And that's one of the key things that has strengthened. When
1950 everybody told us, «You cannot stop Hydro-Québec», it was the heart of the people that was strengthened by love for their children, love for life. That was the source. And that doesn't come from policies, that comes from being human and being mothers. So, that's the key. Thank you.

1955 **MR. ROMEO SAGANASH, JBACE Chairman**

Thank you. Just to, I guess, have the opportunity to say the final words to this exercise that we've gone through for the past four days, we were in Oujé Bougoumou two days ago, Chisasibi yesterday and here in Whapmagoostui, a worthwhile exercise in my view. If it
1960 wasn't for the pressures that we put on both the office of Public Hearings of Québec and the minister, I don't think we would have been here today. And I don't think you people would have had an opportunity to be heard. But I think our efforts to that effect were very worthwhile.

I want to thank you for letting us into your community. It's always a pleasure, at least
1965 for me, to come back to this community. I want you to give thanks to Andrew, to Gary, to Gilbert, to Philip, to Margaret as well behind. And to you Lisa, and George, and Robert, thank you for your collaboration, for your help. I think your efforts that you've put into this exercise were pretty good as well.

1970 Obviously, this is not over for us. The work that we have to do is still not over. Their work that they have to do is not over yet as well. He spoke about the possibility of going to Radisson for the second stage. We still have to decide as committee where our next stage is

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going to be. I took note of the invitation to return here in a couple of days or a couple of weeks for the second stage of our hearings. I took note of that as the Chairman of the Committee and, for now, it's not excluded. We still don't know where to find the money, but it's not excluded.

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So, I want to thank you for that. But definitely rest assured that the issues that you brought up, either verbally or in written form, will be looked at by us and, I'm sure, by Mr. Beauchamp and Mrs. Gallichan. We will do that and try to reflect not only the words that you've spoken here, but also the spirit that you've conveyed to us today.

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Peut-être pour terminer, je prendrais quelques instants pour m'exprimer en français également et remercier l'équipe qui a accompagné les deux commissions pour la partie du territoire cri. Mes remerciements du plus profond de mon coeur.

1990

Je sais qu'un des buts de l'exercice, à tout le moins pour nous dans notre comité, c'est exactement d'essayer de montrer par ailleurs qu'il y a un autre monde qui vit dans ce que vous appelez Québec, qui est très différent. Et si vous avez perçu quelque part, lorsque vous rencontrez des Autochtones, ces qualités qui sont la tolérance, la patience, mais surtout le respect, bien, voilà, vous avez eu depuis les trois dernières journées les raisons pourquoi nous sommes comme ça.

1995

Je sais que c'est parfois très difficile de rester assis pendant longtemps, écouter la même personne pendant longtemps, mais c'est ça notre façon de faire. Et je ne pense pas qu'on a à juger de cette façon de faire. C'est comme ça qu'on est, c'est comme ça qu'on nous a appris à être depuis qu'on est tout petit et c'est comme ça qu'on va toujours être. Et ça, ça ne changera pas.

2000

Alors, ce n'était pas nécessairement le but de l'exercice mais, je pense, de démontrer les dispositions de la convention qui parle de la nécessité de faire les choses différemment dans ce territoire, vous avez eu la preuve depuis les trois dernières journées.

2005

Alors, là-dessus, je vous dis merci, une bonne fin de semaine de repos, et j'espère qu'on aura l'occasion à nouveau de travailler ensemble. Et mes derniers remerciements également pour l'ouverture qu'ont démontrée monsieur Beauchamp et madame Gallichan en tant que commissaires de cette commission sur la gestion de l'eau au Québec, l'ouverture que vous avez démontrée pour ouvrir vos portes et votre expertise. Et aussi la possibilité pour nous d'avoir accès à vos équipes est grandement appréciée. Donc, au nom des autres membres du Comité consultatif, je vous dis un gros merci à vous deux. Merci, bonsoir.

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Je, soussignée, **LISE MAISONNEUVE**, sténographe judiciaire, certifie sous mon serment d'office que les pages ci-dessus sont et contiennent la transcription exacte et fidèle des notes sténographiques prises par moi au moyen du sténomasque, le tout conformément à la Loi.

2020

ET J'AI SIGNÉ:

LISE MAISONNEUVE, s.o.