

Traduction

Mr. André Harvey
Chairman,
Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement
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Mr. Chairman,

On December 15, 2003, I announced, in the presence of my colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks, Mr. Sam Hamad, the creation of a committee of experts mandated to report on the status of scientific knowledge related to seismic surveys, identify the environmental issues associated with conducting seismic surveys in the St. Lawrence Gulf and Estuary and propose possible solutions.

On March 2, 2004, I received the *Expert Committee's Report on Environmental Stakes Associated with Seismic Surveys in the St. Lawrence Gulf and Estuary*, which my colleague and I publicly released on March 5.

In my capacity as Minister of the Environment and in virtue of the authority vested in me by section 6.3 of the Environment Quality Act, I give the mandate to the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement to conduct an inquiry and public hearings on the issue of seismic surveys that may eventually be carried out in the St. Lawrence Gulf and Estuary, as well as the associated environmental issues. I request that the BAPE examine the issues and possible solutions that have been identified by the Expert Committee and to recommend the most promising approaches towards sustainable development.

BAPE's mandate will begin on March 15, 2004 and the Commission's report should be transmitted to me no later than August 31, 2004.

Sincerely,

Thomas Mulcair