

Environmental Assessment of Multiklient Invest Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Seismic Program, 2017 - 2026 Addendum (LGL November 2017)

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**GENERAL COMMENTS**

**Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB)**

It should be noted that the C-NLOPB has recently reviewed the temporal and spatial scopes of *Accord Act* Environmental Assessments (EAs) and made the decision to shorten the temporal scope of geophysical/geological EAs to six years to become more aligned with Period I of an exploration licence. Also, the southern boundary of the spatial scope of those EAs in the Labrador Shelf offshore area can only extend as far south as 52 degrees north and for EAs not offshore Labrador, as far north as 52 degrees. Therefore, the C-NLOPB's determination on the significance of adverse environmental effects of the proposed Multiklient Invest AS Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Seismic Program, 2017-2026 will reflect this temporal and spatial decision.

**Nunatsiavut Government**

Our specific comments on the cumulative effects assessment remain unanswered, specifically with regard to the scenario used for the assessment. They are reiterated here:

“This environmental assessment does not clearly state the proponent’s scenario with which they are assessing their own cumulative effects of a 10-year program. The proponent states that the maximum possible combinations within each year are 2D and 2D or 2D and 3D and 4D; therefore the maximum combination should be used each year for 10 years to assess cumulative effects. The proponent is applying for a 10-year project; the environmental assessment should be able to properly assess cumulative effects over that time span by assessing the certain and probable projects over that time period – otherwise each project should reduce the scope to an assessable timeframe; likely resulting in each seismic project being treated as an annual or bi-annual project with separate environmental assessments.”

**Monitoring Plans**

MKI's response does not detail how the data collected will be used, why it is being collected, and how it will be incorporated into an iterative monitoring program for a 10-year project. It states that “opportunities for the adoption of best practices over the 10-year project...exist.” However, without a clear monitoring objective and program it would be difficult to incorporate basic observation data into improved monitoring practices. Hence, there is a need to create a detailed, rigorous monitoring program for the project.

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**Fish, Food and Allied Workers**

It is unclear how the proponent's responses regarding acknowledgement to the assessment of cumulative effects regarding seismic activity (page 6) and the anticipated increased reliance on groundfish catches in the near future (page 8) will be included within the addendum of the Environmental Assessment. We ask that this be clarified.

As well, it is unclear how the comment regarding DFO not indicating an official spatial and/or temporal buffer mitigation for seismic operations (page 10) be represented in the Environmental Assessment. Will the previous comment (7 day/30 km) be removed from the document?

The response regarding Compensation Guidelines is vague (page 10). Does the proponent engage a response organization during seismic activity? Does the proponent have a proactive plan in place to ensure fair and compensation to affected parties for attributable damages in the event of any loss or damage arising from a spill or debris or the incurrance of expenses by taking remedial action in relation to a spill?

**Groundfish Enterprise Allocation Council (GEAC)-Canadian Association of Prawn Producers (CAPP)**

We appreciate the improved planning and activity reports that are described by the Addendum, but our concerns continue to exist, and some word-smithing of the report are not sufficient to address our concerns on the relationship between seismic exploration activity and catch rates experienced by our harvesters.

## **SPECIFIC COMMENTS**

### **Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)**

**Section 4.3.1 Information Sources, page 64** - It would be useful to reference the new Table 4.2 at the end of the first sentence of the second paragraph in Section 4.3.1.

**Section 4.5.1 Marine Mammals, Table 4.17, pages 133-135** - As it is possible that the Davis Strait-Baffin Bay-Labrador Sea population of Northern bottlenose whales occur in the Project Area, this population should be described in Section 4.5.1.3. In the last sentence of the response, "Table 17" should be "Table 4.17".

**Section 4.6.2.3 Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles, Northern Bottlenose Whales, page 156** - Text should be added to include updated research provided in comment on Section 4.5.1 Marine Mammals, Table 4.17, pages 133-135.

**Section 4.7.1 Sensitive Areas within the Study Area, Figure 4.40, page 160** - Note that candidate NMCA sites may have been revised; Parks Canada would be the appropriate contact to confirm locations. The proponent should also be aware that a CSAS was recently completed and a document will soon be released with an updated map/list of EBSAs (specifically for the southern and eastern portion of Newfoundland). Modifications to EBSA boundaries and descriptions may be required.

**Data gaps associated with Sensitive Area VEC, page 162** - Kenchington et al. 2016 should be incorporated into other appropriate sections of the EA, such as Section 4.2.1.2 Benthic Invertebrates (Deep-water Corals and Sponges, pages 51-54).

**Section 5.4 Effects Assessment Procedures, page 169** – A very short summary has been provided. For consistency with previous EA Reports, it is suggested that additional details be provided (e.g., see Environmental Assessment of WesternGeco's Eastern Newfoundland Offshore Seismic Program, 2015-2024 <http://www.cnlopb.ca/assessments/westgecoeast3.php> ). For example, magnitude ratings should be described with proportions and types of effects.

**Section 5.5 Mitigation Measures, page 172** - A very short summary has been provided. For consistency with previous EA Reports, it is suggested that additional details be provided (e.g., see Environmental Assessment of WesternGeco's Eastern Newfoundland Offshore Seismic Program, 2015-2024 <http://www.cnlopb.ca/assessments/westgecoeast3.php> ). Additionally, associated VECs should be provided for all mitigation categories.

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**Section 2.2.7 Seismic Streamers, pg 10** - The environmental effects assessment is based on “a maximum of 24 streamers”?