



Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture

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Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador
Offshore Petroleum Board

Ms. Elizabeth Young – Environmental Analyst
Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board
Fifth Floor, TD Place, 140 Water Street
St. John’s, NL A1C 6H6

Dear Ms. Young:

I am writing in response to your request for review of the Environmental Assessment of the PDI Production Inc. Port-au-Port Peninsula Ocean Bottom Cable Seismic/VSP Program 2009-2014. We have reviewed the consultants report and other relevant information, and are pleased to see most of our issues addressed.

Of utmost concern to us are potential disturbances upon the behaviour and distribution of finfish and shellfish, and their associated fisheries. We note in section 7.3 of the report under the mitigations section that:

“PDIP does not intend to commence seismic acquisition during sensitive fishing seasons, and will work to establish a mutually acceptable schedule with stakeholders. Within that context, seismic acquisition over the Garden Hill South area is most likely to take place during fall.”

We agree with this strategy, and recommend PDIP follow this course of action for all facets of this project. We feel that autumn migrations toward deeper water by species such as lobster, crab, and cod should allow an opportunity to perform this shallow water work while minimizing potential impacts upon these resources and their associated fisheries. An important fall pelagic fisheries also occurs in the area. We therefore encourage PDIP to consult with fishers, prior to conducting surveys, to ensure there are no aggregations of fish, spawning herring in particular, present during blasting.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on your proposal, and are pleased to be part of this process in support of offshore oil and gas exploration and development in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Sincerely,

Tom Dooley, Director
Sustainable Fisheries and Oceans Policy Division