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Presentation from the Magdalen Islands'

Owner-Fishermen Association (APPIM)

Association des pêcheurs des Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Presentation up-date of the Environmental Strategic Study

(West of the offshore area of Newfoundland-Labrador)

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Magdalen Islands, Québec

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Owner-Fishermen Association

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Amongst the public notices that you present to the Maritimes' citizens, in order to look at them within the framework of the EES (ÉES) update, only one seems to really be focused on the environment.

We therefore studied it and applied each point to our geographic situation and to the economic activity in question: the lobster fishery. The whole object of the operation was to inform you of our correlation with that environment.

The physical environment:

- **The shores, the littoral**

  In full growth, the management and the protection of Magdalen Islands' littorals are tools that support the principle of lasting development. The resources found within are the object of constant studies by accredited research centers. For one, it is along our shores that we develop the lobster reef, the deposit and the annual stocks of lobster in nursery, the collection and the identification of the various shellfishes and intrusive species for genetic analysis purposes, etc. <u>A comprehensive description of those activities should be included in the intervention plan from the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) in case of an oil spill.</u>

- **The climate, the weather, the storms**

  Because of global warming, bad weathers are more and more frequent, powerful and unpredictable in most of the Gulf regions. We are of the opinion that this should be further studied by your firm, considering the fact that bad climate conditions are the main cause of accidents with oil exploration and exploitation projects.

Human Activity:

- The fishery **is the most ancient coastal sea activity in the St-Lawrence Gulf. For the year 2008, we consider that the activities of the fishery, the aquaculture and the transformation of sea products were responsible for close to 8 000 jobs and generated approximately 300 million dollars in economic repercussions in Québec. The majority of the jobs (90%) in the maritime regions of Québec are related to the activities of commercial and transformation fishery, which includes more than 3 000 fishermen and fishermen-assistants and also 4 000 workers spread out in 72 sea product transformation factories. All of that industry depends on the market and even the perception of contamination is, for the markets, a determining factor for the profitability of the fishery.**

- The seismic surveys **must stay far away from the sites designated as sensitive. Following the deposition of this study (ÉES), we can question ourselves as to the validity of a project for 3 000 km of seismic surveys within the cod and the capelin spawning area that will be done by the C-NLOPB. Also, in 2010, despite the recommendations from the fishermen, the surveys were done during the cod's migration period, in the Laurentian channel of the Gulf of St-Lawrence.**

  In our opinion, we do not know enough on the behavior of the species at different stages of their development to accurately evaluate the consequences. Considering the fact that the seismic surveys act as earthquakes on the sea floor, we really must avoid any lobster and crab reproduction sector, since the females carry their eggs for one year (2 years for the crab) and the larvae of both species then follow the current on the surface for a period of 8 to 15 weeks, before settling on sea bottoms all over the Gulf. Any seismic survey endangers those life cycles that ensure the fishing industry.

- **Newfoundland oil rigs: the risk assessment and the promotion of projects are two mandates that put the C-NLOPB, at least on the surface, in a conflict of interest in the Old Harry prospect. White Rose is the first project that was conducted in this manner. The other rigs were assessed (environmental assessments) by the Department of the Environment in a more reliable manner.**

- The products **that are mixed and injected in order to facilitate the prospecting and the prospecting debris are toxic but the industry throws them back at sea anyway. It is with these *prospecting sediments* that they control the gas / oil pressure, but since they can't retrieve them on the floating rigs (p.243 ESS (ÉES) 2005): the heaviest debris stay around the oil well and the lighter ones are dispersed by the currents. All of those products enter the main current of the Gulf and circulate during one year before exiting towards the Atlantic. Therefore, again according to the ESS (ÉES) of 2005, when in the larva stage, all species are 10 times more vulnerable than the adult species to toxicity, because their organism is not mature enough to detoxify itself, causing genetic malformations and reproduction problems. Those toxins, when absorbed by the Gulf's food chain, go on to contaminate our own food chain via the fisheries.**

- The accidental oil **spills are frequent.**

Therefore, considering that the above-mentioned information represents only a fraction of the lack of knowledge that puts our industry in jeopardy, the Magdalen Islands' Owner-Fishermen Association recommends that this update of the environmental strategic study (ÉES) considers a more detailed analysis regarding the impact that the various exploration projects have on the commercial fisheries in the Gulf of St-Lawrence.

All of the information found in this analysis was obtained from:

- **The environmental strategic evaluation (ÉES) presented by the Firm LGL Limited for the C-NLOPB;**

- **The environmental strategic study II (ÉES), presented by Génivar for the Government of Québec;**

- **The Department of Fisheries and Oceans website;**

- **The 2008 assessment of commercial fisheries and aquaculture, presented by the Québec Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Department.**