

## **Submission from Save Our Seas and Shores PEI to the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board**

At its meeting on September 10, 2013, members of the Prince Edward Island Chapter of Save Our Seas and Shores decided to make the following submission in response to the draft Western Newfoundland Offshore Area Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) update report.

WHEREAS the Western Newfoundland Offshore SEA draft report clearly acknowledges the following:

- The biological importance and sensitivity of Newfoundland's offshore area in the Gulf of St. Lawrence;
- The importance of fisheries and tourism to the regional economy;
- Not enough is known about the biology of the Gulf and the impact of oil and gas activities on it;
- Uncertainties about the efficiency of mitigation measures;
- The enormous impact that any oil spill in the Gulf would have;
- The lack of social acceptance, in any of the five provinces bordering on the Gulf, of the idea of oil exploration in the Gulf.

WHEREAS intervention capacity in the Gulf of St. Lawrence is inadequate (as has been shown by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development);

WHEREAS in the early 2000s, the *Fisheries Resource Conservation Council (FRCC)* and the *Senate Standing Committee on Fisheries* both recommended a moratorium on petroleum exploration in the Gulf;

WHEREAS liability for oil companies is still limited to \$30 million, and even if increased to \$1 billion as currently proposed, would remain inadequate considering the potential costs associated with a major spill;

WHEREAS any major spill could negatively affect all five Gulf provinces; and

WHEREAS an integrated environmental review of polluting industrial activities and climate change and their cumulative impact in the entire Gulf of St. Lawrence has still not been performed;

The PEI Chapter of Save Our Seas and Shores recommends that the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board :

- Put a moratorium on the issuing of any new exploration licenses in the Western Newfoundland offshore area;
- Cancel the call for bids issued on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2013 for four parcels in the Western Newfoundland offshore area;
- Refrain from giving authorization to projects currently submitted in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, including Corridor Resources' Old Harry project and Shoal Point Energy and Black Spruce Exploration's Western Newfoundland drilling program.