

GNL Québec will actively protect belugas in the St. Lawrence

A Charter of commitments and a \$ 5 million fund to help the Saguenay Fjord users minimize their impact on marine mammals

Saguenay, February 10, 2020— Motivated by its desire to innovate and set a new standard within its industry, GNL Québec is very proud to confirm today the deployment of an Environmental Commitment Charter for the protection of marine mammals. This charter is intended to guide the company's actions in terms of managing the impacts of its activities on the marine mammals of the Saguenay and the St. Lawrence rivers, particularly the St. Lawrence beluga. The initiative is notably supported by an envelope of more than \$ 5.2 million intended to support research and to facilitate the carrying out of concrete measures and actions in the community making it possible to reduce the underwater noise footprint of users of the Saguenay fjord, in particular through its innovative Sound Gain Program (SGP).

Developed by GNL Québec, in cooperation with the specialized firm Hemmera, the Commitment Charter is an addition to the mitigation measures and commitments already made by the company, notably in its environmental impact study, in order to reduce the potential impact of its activities on marine mammals. For the sake of consistency, the Charter is based on 4 pillars directly inspired by the 4 strategic avenues contained in the Government of Canada's 2019 Action Plan proposal to reduce noise around belugas,

specifically:

- The advancement of scientific knowledge and technological innovations;
- The adoption of best practices;
- Awareness;
- Consultation with local stakeholders.

Sound gain program

GNL Québec's Charter of Commitment contains a Sound Gains Program (SGP), one of the key measures of the process. Through this program, GNL Québec intends to support concrete measures and actions to reduce underwater noise in the Saguenay fjord. For example, the program could provide financial support to a shipping company that would like to acquire quieter and more efficient engines.

To impartially, credibly and transparently determine the projects, measures and initiatives supported through the SGP, the management of this program will be entrusted to an external firm. The latter will act independently and will be responsible for evaluating the requests received under the program via a working committee involving various local partners.

Support research and raising awareness

Under the Charter of commitment, GNL Québec plans to practically support data/information collection and research activities in order to better understand underwater noise potential impacts on belugas and marine mammals.

An additional \$ 250 000 will be allocated to the « MARS project », developed in collaboration with scientific partners. This project consists in deploying a permanent marine acoustics research station in the seaway in order to measure the noise at the source of the various commercial vessels to improve scientific knowledge on the acoustic signature of vessels and, consequently, establish and propose mitigation measures adapted to the operational needs of the industry.

The company also intends, through these activities, to work in close collaboration with researchers, organizations, industry players, shipowners and other partners involved in maritime issues in order to facilitate information and knowledge sharing in reducing underwater noise and promoting sound practices for coexistence with marine mammals.

Quote

"The initiative we are unveiling today is a testament to our commitment to do it right and to act as a leader in both sustainable development and economic development.

With this Charter of Commitment, we wish to send a strong signal. We want to be a proactive player and serve as an example to raise industry standards, in Quebec, in Canada, but also elsewhere in the world. We want to change this noise reducing challenge into research and development opportunities. Thus, this Charter supports and reinforces our commitments made in our environmental impact study, particularly regarding the design of quieter ships adapted to our needs.

In accordance with the precautionary principle, we wish to contribute to a better understanding of the underwater sound environment in the Saguenay and the St. Lawrence rivers, and facilitate the implementation of solutions for their preservation and that of marine mammals, including the beluga of the St. Lawrence. "

- Pat Fiore
President of GNL Québec

About Énergie Saguenay

Since 2014, GNL Quebec has been working to develop a natural gas liquefaction facility at Port Saguenay. The Project involves liquefaction, storage, and liquefied natural gas (LNG) equipment, and has an estimated cost of CA\$9 billion. In addition to major short-, mid- and long-term economic benefits in Québec, the Project aims to support the fight against climate change in Europe, Asia, and other parts of the world by providing a transition energy that can replace more polluting sources like coal and fuel oil. But what makes the Project really stand apart from all other GNL projects is the fact that it will be powered by hydroelectricity, making it the cleanest, lowest GHG emitting liquefaction plant worldwide.

A video featuring the Project is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLKN8Zvm5mQ>.

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