

Summary of Issues

Matane Port Facilities Expansion Project

The Summary of Issues presents the key issues that the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) considers relevant to the federal impact assessment process for the Matane Port Facilities Expansion Project (the project). The proponent's response to this Summary of Issues will help inform IAAC's decision on whether an impact assessment is required under section 16 of the *Impact Assessment Act*. If an impact assessment is required, these key issues and the proponent's response will be used to define the scope of the impact assessment, and to develop the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and plans, as appropriate.

In preparing this summary, IAAC considered input from federal authorities, Indigenous groups, and the public received to date including during the public consultation period on the summary of the initial project description submitted by the proponent. IAAC invites the proponent to consult all participants' original comments posted on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site for the project (Reference Number [90008](#)).

The proponent is required to describe how it intends to address the key issues identified below as part of the development of its project. A high-level description is sufficient. Where relevant, the proponent is encouraged to specify whether certain key issues will be addressed by another competent authority, for example, through legislation or regulations, or through commitments made by the proponent such as the implementation of best practices, policies or standards that the proponent has committed to meeting.

Key Issues

Fish and Fish Habitat

- Potential adverse effects of disturbance and increased collision risks for at risk marine mammals in the area, including blue whale, beluga whale (a species of heritage importance to First Nations) and certain seal species, due to marine traffic during construction and increased marine traffic during operation.

Appendix – Other Comments, Advice, and Recommendations

IAAC provides, for information purposes only, a list of other comments, advice, and recommendations received. The proponent is advised to consult the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site for the project (Reference Number [90008](#)) to review the original comments.

OTHER COMMENTS

Project Activities

- Concerns have been raised about the health of Indigenous peoples in relation to the release of contaminated sediments into open water and the risk of accidental spills of contaminants, including the effects of bioaccumulation of contaminants in traditional foods from fishing. These concerns are also shared by the public for recreational and commercial fisheries.
- Concerns have been raised about the potential effects of the breakwater extension, the installation of new infrastructure, and dredging activities on harbour turbulence, local currents, sedimentation, ice dynamics, and surf energy in the Matane-sur-Mer area. These impacts could exacerbate coastal erosion and damage the banks of riverside properties, as well as the mouth of the Matane River.
- Concerns have been raised by the local population about the disturbance caused by construction activities (noise, dust, truck traffic, light pollution) and the duration and schedule of the work.
- Concerns have been expressed about the planned number of non-local construction workers, in relation to the capacity of the local labour market, as well as the terms of their accommodation—whether in town (with or without families) or in temporary camps—given the current shortage in the housing market.

Public Interest

- Comments were made regarding the positive effects of the project in terms of local and regional economic benefits, particularly in terms of job creation and retention, local economic development, and attracting new economic players.
- Comments were made regarding the positive effects of the project on the productivity of local businesses and the advantages of being able to use boat transport versus land transport.

Permits and Authorizations

- It is important to consult with Transport Canada to ensure compliance with the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* and the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001*, particularly with regard to the necessary permits and authorizations.
- It is recommended to consult with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) as soon as possible to ensure that the requirements of the *Fisheries Act*, *Marine Mammal Regulations*, *Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations*, and *Species at Risk Act* are taken into account.
- It is also advisable to examine fish habitat compensation options now to offset the deterioration, destruction, or disturbance of fish habitat and fish mortality. This approach must comply with DFO's Compensation Policy.

Indigenous Peoples

- Concerns have been raised about the potential adverse effects of construction activities, including dredging and open water discharge, on the traditional and commercial fishing activities of the Mi'gmaq First Nation and the Wolastoqiyik Wamspekwuk First Nation, particularly lobster fishing.
- Concerns have been raised about the potential adverse effects to navigation in the project area (increase, disruption, and user safety), including cumulative effects, which could have adverse impacts on access, resources, and the exercise of Indigenous rights, including fishing activities.

Fish and Fish Habitat (including marine mammals)

- Concerns have been raised about the potential effects of the project on marine wildlife, including marine mammals' species at risk (blue whales, belugas, seals) and fish and their habitats. These effects could result from underwater noise associated with construction activities (pile driving, dredging), encroachment of infrastructure into the marine environment, dredging and discharge into open water, which could lead to the resuspension of sediments and the dispersion of contaminants, the introduction of invasive aquatic species, the risk of accidental release of harmful substances, and exploitation activities, including runoff management on wharves.
- Concerns have been raised about the potential interaction of dredging activities involving contaminated sediments and discharge into open water on Atlantic salmon, which is a culturally significant species for First Nations in eastern Canada.
- Potential adverse effects of runoff on the wharf and storage areas during operational activities, including the transshipment, handling, and storage of substances and materials (road salt, marine diesel fuel, various bulk materials, and others).

Migratory birds

- Concerns were raised about the potential adverse effects of project construction and operation activities on migratory birds. To reduce these effects, it is recommended that the [Guidelines to avoid harm to migratory birds](#) be consulted and that the nesting period for migratory birds (nesting area C4) be taken into account in work planning.