

**FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE ÉNERGIE SAGUENAY PROJECT**  
**Summary of public comments and concerns about the proponent's environmental impact study**  
**Open House June 11, 2019**  
**Held at the Le Montagnais Hotel, Chicoutimi, Québec**

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) held an open house in Chicoutimi on June 11, 2019, to gather public comments and concerns about the Énergie Saguenay project's environmental assessment study, which was filed with the Agency by GNL Québec Inc. (the Proponent). This event is one of the opportunities given to the public to participate in the environmental assessment conducted under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*.

The Proponent, GNL Québec Inc., attended the open house to present its project and the conclusions of its environmental impact study, and to answer questions from the public.

This event was held in the presence of several federal departments acting as experts on the federal environmental assessment committee: Parks Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Canadian Coast Guard, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Transport Canada, the Laurentian Pilotage Authority, the Corporation des pilotes du Bas-Saint-Laurent (Bas-Saint-Laurent Pilots Corporation), Health Canada and the Saguenay Port Authority.

Approximately 42 participants had the opportunity to speak directly with the department representatives present as well as the Agency to express their concerns about the potential environmental effects of the project and the applicable regulatory framework.

Two interactive activities were also offered to the participants to help them identify the issues or concerns that are most important to them. The issues that received the most comments were greenhouse gas emissions, the impact of maritime shipping on marine mammals, the origin of natural gas and extraction methods, the cumulative effects of increased marine traffic on aquatic wildlife and the decline in the Fjord's high natural value.

The table below summarizes the issues raised and the concerns expressed during this consultation activity. The Agency and the federal committee will review these concerns and consider them in their analysis.

Another consultation period will be announced at a later date on the draft Agency's environmental assessment report before its recommendations are forwarded to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change regarding the significance of the project's environmental effects.

**Main concerns and comments raised by the public  
in connection with the Proponent’s environmental impact study**

Topics	Questions/concerns
Project’s alternative means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is liquefied natural gas transported inland rather than closer to the sea?</li> <li>• Are there any more sustainable and less harmful methods than gas for our ecosystem? Is liquefied natural gas a transitional energy?</li> </ul>
Justification of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are studies being conducted on the social acceptability of the project?</li> <li>• How will the Proponent promote local employment for the project?</li> </ul>
Noise and light	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise generated by the project could affect living conditions at hunting camps. Concerns are raised because the initial noise level would not have been measured. The impact of noise on the opposite bank should be taken into account.</li> </ul>
Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns are raised about greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Participants want to know what the Agency is looking for.</li> <li>• Are LNG tanker emissions (GHGs) taken into account? Are they added to the emissions of other boats in the water?</li> <li>• Will the project be evaluated considering the climate changes it would cause?</li> <li>• Where will the gas be extracted? How much?</li> </ul>
Risk of accidents and malfunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions were asked about the risk of shipping accidents, especially the risk of collisions between vessels on the Saguenay River and the effects of such collisions. Is this river a navigation risk area, especially in the winter?</li> <li>• Questions were asked about the risk of accidents in relation to the increase in marine traffic and the size of the vessels.</li> <li>• Will people be expropriated to respect the safe areas of ships?</li> </ul>

Topics	Questions/concerns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is the United States worried about liquefied natural gas transport? Are there studies on liquefied natural gas transport? How does the vessel inspection process compare to that of other countries?</li> </ul>
Water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liquefied natural gas ships arriving from overseas pose a risk of introducing invasive aquatic species in the Saguenay Fjord and the St. Lawrence River. Are we also concerned about the effects for beluga whales in the St. Lawrence? How is ballast water from vessels handled and treated? Does anyone verify that they comply with the regulations?</li> <li>• What would be the effects of a liquefied natural gas spill in the water?</li> <li>• The increase in marine traffic could contribute to an increase in microplastics.</li> </ul>
The beluga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The beluga recovery plan mentions that noise is a threat. Doesn't the project and the Proponent's conclusions contradict the objectives of that plan?</li> <li>• Questions were asked about the effect of noise on the beluga whale. Are substantive studies being conducted on this subject?</li> <li>• Are we also concerned about the effects on beluga whales in the St. Lawrence?</li> <li>• There is uncertainty about the effects of noise on marine mammals. Why not wait before evaluating and approving the project?</li> </ul>
The Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are merchant vessels allowed to navigate the Marine Park?</li> <li>• What are the impacts of the increase in marine traffic and of liquefied natural gas on the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park?</li> </ul>
Navigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns were raised about traffic at the mouth of the Saguenay River. How would cohabitation be possible between commercial vessels, ferries and recreational boats?</li> <li>• Can two liquefied natural gas tankers meet in the Saguenay?</li> <li>• Will new icebreakers be needed?</li> <li>• Questions were asked about the presence of and need for tugboats.</li> <li>• Questions were asked about the TERMPOL process. Will the conclusions of this process be made available? Will the Agency wait for the conclusions of the TERMPOL process before making its recommendations to the Minister of Environment?</li> </ul>

Topics	Questions/concerns
Recreational tourism activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project could have an impact on the landscape in what is a highly recreational tourism area. Recreational activities are not compatible with major projects.</li> <li>• Concerns were raised about the possibility of cohabitation between boaters and commercial vessels in the area. Will the safety of recreational boats and kayaks be compromised?</li> <li>• Will the liquefied natural gas tankers have the same restrictions as the kayaks?</li> <li>• Will the project have any impact on diving and excursion activities in Anse-à-la-Puce? Will the site still be accessible?</li> </ul>
The environmental assessment process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the federal environmental assessment work? What are the next steps for consultation? How many days are left?</li> <li>• Why is there no public meeting similar to the BAPE?</li> <li>• Why is the Gazoduq Project subject to a separate environmental assessment?</li> <li>• Why is it not possible to have more than 30 days to read such an extensive EIS?</li> <li>• Will other port projects be considered in the assessment?</li> <li>• Navigation should be included in the scope of the project.</li> <li>• Is there any collaboration between the provincial and federal processes?</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Gazoduq and the power line should be added to the scope of the project.</li> <li>• Will the project create heat islands?</li> <li>• Questions were asked about archaeological inventories.</li> <li>• The project generates anxiety and has psychological impacts. Are these impacts being considered?</li> </ul>