



November 12, 2024

RE: Comments on Build's Nova Scotia's Boat Harbour Remediation Project Draft Environmental Assessment Report (October 15, 2024), outlining the proposed remediation of Boat Harbour and nearby lands.

To whom it may concern at the Impact Assessment Agency Canada (IAAC);

This letter responds to the Draft Environmental Assessment Report for the Boat Harbour Remediation Project in Nova Scotia, published on October 15, 2024, and open for a 30-day comment period.

After a comprehensive review of the draft Environmental Assessment report and the draft potential conditions published by the IAAC, Sipekne'katik expresses its full support for the final position adopted by Pictou Landing First Nation (PLFN). Sipekne'katik First Nation also reaffirms its support for the resolution passed by the Assembly of Mi'kmaq Chiefs to authorize and empower PLFN to lead consultation for this project on behalf of the Mi'kmaq community.

While we acknowledge that the proposed remediation project aims to improve the environmental conditions at Boat Harbour, which has suffered severe degradation due to the operation of the former pulp mill, we remain concerned about the proposed permanent storage of hazardous waste on-site. Significant risks are associated with the potential leakage or spills of hazardous materials, which could further damage the fragile wetland ecosystem.

Furthermore, we want to highlight that despite the proposed remediation efforts, it is highly unlikely that PLFN and the broader Mi'kmaq community will resume traditional use of the land, water, and resources in the Boat Harbour area. Therefore, additional compensation is necessary to address the permanent loss of Mi'kmaq Constitutional Rights in this region due to a project Mi'kmaq communities have always contested.

At this time, the Sipekne'katik consultation team disagrees with the position taken by the IAAC and will continue to support the position of PLFN. Accordingly, we recommend that the proponent ensure the proper remediation of the local wetland and relocate the hazardous waste to a secure containment facility at an alternative site away from the reserve and traditional Mi'kmaq lands. Several other potential sites on Crown land or private property near Boat Harbour have been identified as suitable by PLFN but not adequately assessed by the Province. Without such an



assessment, it is impossible to evaluate whether all reasonable options have been considered with the same level of detail as those proposed in the current Environmental Assessment.

As a final reminder to all parties, we would like to clarify and restate that the Boat Harbour Remediation Project is located in Mik'ma'ki, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq. Each Mi'kmaq Band holds Treaty and Aboriginal Rights over lands, waterways and natural resources that they have utilized, benefitted from, and occupied since time immemorial - **no undertaken activity shall impede the exercise of such Rights.** Given its cultural and environmental significance to the Mi'kmaq people, it is still unfortunate that such activity was initially authorized in this area.

We trust that these comments will be duly considered by the IAAC during the decision-making process.

Respectfully,

Marine Courtois, *Marine Biologist, on behalf of the Sipekne'katik Governance Initiative*
marinecourtois@sipeknekatik.ca

Encl.

CC:

ronknockwood@sipeknekatik.ca ; rogerlewis@sipeknekatik.ca ; consultation@sipeknekatik.ca ;
directorofoperations@sipeknekatik.ca ; kjulian@sipeknekatik.ca ; eldonpaul@sipeknekatik.ca ;
deannesack@sipeknekatik.ca ; michelleglasgow@sipeknekatik.ca