

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
Newfoundland and Labrador Satellite Office
10 Barters Hill, Suite 301
St. Johns, NL A1C 6M1

SUBJECT: Qalipu First Nation Comments on the Draft Agreement to Conduct a Regional Assessment of Offshore Oil and Gas Exploratory Drilling East of Newfoundland and Labrador

To whom it may concern:

The purpose of this letter is to provide comments on the Draft Agreement to Conduct a Regional Assessment of Offshore Oil and Gas Exploratory Drilling East of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Qalipu First Nation (QFN) represents approximately 18,000 registered members in Newfoundland and abroad and is made up of 67 traditional Mi'kmaq communities across Newfoundland. As a band, we provide core programs and services to our members, including Natural Resource Management. Specific to the Regional Study of NL Offshore Exploration Drilling, QFN and affiliates maintain fishing licences overlapping possible exploration sites.

The Draft Agreement provided by the Agency is thorough and includes a wide range of factors to be considered in the Regional Assessment. As a result, we hope to see an effective framework that places value not only on specific culturally/traditionally important species but focuses on ecosystem health in general, and how it may be affected by offshore oil exploration and related activities. We would also like to see an improved EA process which enables increased public participation, allowing interested groups to efficiently and effectively take part in the process.

In summary, we support the Draft Agreement to Conduct a Regional Assessment of Offshore Oil and Gas Exploratory Drilling East of Newfoundland and Labrador and look forward to a framework with improved efficiency of the EA process while maintaining or increasing environmental protection.

Sincerely,
<Original signed by>

Brendan Mitchell