

Minister of the Environment



Ministre de l'Environnement

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H3

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JAN 13 2005

MAIL ROOM
SALLE DE COURIER

2005 JAN 14 P 2:01

WEB / ONE

Mr. Kenneth W. Vollman
Chairman
National Energy Board
444 Seventh Avenue South West
Calgary AB T2P 0X8

Dear Mr. Vollman:

I would like to inform you of my decision concerning the environmental assessment process which will apply to the Rabaska Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal Project, proposed by Gaz Métro Limited Partnership, Gaz de France and Enbridge Inc.

Taking into account the report and recommendation you provided to me on behalf of all the responsible authorities, I have decided to refer the project to a review panel pursuant to subsection 29(1) of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency will release an official statement to inform the public of my decision. The Agency will also announce the availability of funds from the Participant Funding Program and will release for public consultation, the preliminary guidelines for the preparation of the environmental impact statement.

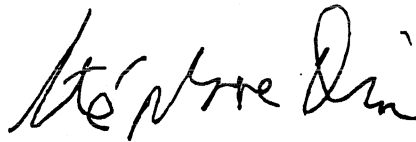
An environmental assessment of the Rabaska Project is required by Quebec under the *Loi sur la qualité de l'environnement* (Environmental Quality Act). In the spirit of the new *Canada-Quebec Agreement on Environmental Assessment Cooperation*, the Agency will work with the *ministère de l'Environnement du Québec* (Quebec Environment Department) and with the National Energy Board to explore options to coordinate the two environmental assessment processes as well as the Board's regulatory process.

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The Agency will inform your staff and the federal authorities about the next steps of the process. A copy of this letter will also be sent to the three other responsible authorities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stéphane Dion', written in a cursive style.

Stéphane Dion

c.c.: Sue Kirby, Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Nicole Pageot, Regional General Manager, Transport Canada
Claude Jacques, Secretary, Canadian Transportation Agency