

# LE FLEUVE

Newsletter

Saint-Laurent Vision 2000  
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## IN TUNE

Riparian populations know the St. Lawrence River, they frequent it every day, see it evolve, change and witness the transformations it is subjected to through the years. In addition, their involvement in protection and restoration projects of the St. Lawrence is crucial.

SLV 2000, with its Community Involvement Component, is structured so as to motivate, encourage and support community participation in the development of projects deemed a priority in their region.

Through two main programs, the ZIP and the Community Interaction programs, the community has now the means to develop local actions and to insure the necessary technical and financial support.

The dynamic involvement of riparian populations, their knowledge of the habitat, and their concern in maintaining the sustainable development of the St. Lawrence represent a definite and very justified goal. By combining our objectives, we will be able to move forward and obtain beneficial and tangible results for us all.

The Community Involvement Harmonization Committee.

A Framework for a Government-Stratégies  
Saint-Laurent Agreement

## Relying on a Partnership of Excellence

**W**e are witnessing a new tendency in the global implementation process of large scale provincial and federal projects; more and more bonds or agreements are being made between governments and various external partners. We want take advantage of everyone's expertise in reaching common goals. Last April 7, SLV 2000 has recently proved this by signing an Agreement with Stratégies Saint-Laurent for the implementation of a Zones of Primary Intervention program (ZIP).

It is during a press conference in Baie-Comeau that provincial and federal governments and Stratégies Saint-Laurent officially became partners committed to a dynamic protection, restoration and development of the St. Lawrence. People responsible for the signing of the Agreement are: Marc Hudon, chairperson of Stratégies Saint-Laurent, Jean-Pierre Gauthier and Denys Jean (represented by George Arseneault),

cochairpersons of the SLV 2000 Agreement.

### Well-defined Roles and Responsibilities

In order to develop a good spirit of cooperation and to reach the set goals of the ZIP program, the Agreement defines the exact roles that the three major ZIP program partners will have to play. These partners are: the federal and provincial governments, Stratégies Saint-Laurent, and the ZIP committees.



Baie-Comeau, April 7, 1995. The signing of an Agreement in order to profit from everyone's area of expertise. From left to right: George Arseneault, Marc Hudon and Jean-Pierre Gauthier.

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# Motivated People, People of Action

**F**ull speed ahead with Lake Saint-François public consultation, a "Zones of Primary Intervention" (ZIP) activity that concretely reflects the desire to include the community in the process of taking charge of the management of the St. Lawrence. While two other consultations, those of Lakes Saint-Pierre and Saint-Louis, have already been held in the 1988-1993 SLAP framework, the Lake Saint-François consultation is the first one to be organized within the SLV 2000 framework.

It is in Saint-Anicet, in mid-February, that the various members of the ZIP program—governmental partners, Stratégies Saint-Laurent, the Haut Saint-Laurent ZIP committee, citizens and representatives of regional organizations of Lake Saint-François—have planned to meet. The undeniable success of the consultation confirms the magnitude of the ZIP program. Created and started within the SLAP framework, the ZIP program continues its progression within SLV 2000. It is supported by the Community Involvement Component which was created specifically to insure community participation in the protection and restoration of the St. Lawrence.

## First and Foremost a Knowledge Assessment Report

On January 17, 1995, governmental partners working in the Community Involvement Component have officially filed the regional knowledge assessment report of Lake Saint-François. Created by a provincial and federal team, this report summarizes the overall available data on the biological, physico-chemical and socio-economical aspects of Lake Saint-François, one of the 13 defined within the ZIP program. It identifies uses, resources and environmental problems specific to this area.

Some 25 days after filing the report (February 10 and 11), the second aspect of the ZIP program came into play: the public consultation. This aspect falls under the jurisdiction of one of the nine ZIP committees currently working along the St. Lawrence, the Haut Saint-Laurent ZIP committee. This committee is composed of various people concerned with the protection and the restoration of the St. Lawrence River, and who are willing to make concrete gestures and actively participate in the restoration of the Lake Saint-François region.

## An Elaborate Public Consultation

As mentioned by Claire Lachance, Haut Saint-Laurent ZIP committee coordinator, "the public consultation was a complete success. Almost 200 people were present at the seminars and participated in the workshops. These two work-filled days have gone by very smoothly."

On the evening of Friday, February 10, a discussion group made-up of six specialists was heard; Hans Biberhoffer of Environment Canada, Ontario region, was one of them. The on-going attempts to eliminate pollution in the Cornwall and Massena upstream regions were of particular interests.

The following Saturday, February 11, Environment Canada representatives, Ann Jourdain and Marie-José Auclair, as well as Paul Benoît and Pierre Fournier of the ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune du Québec (MEF) gave essential elements of the report. Furthermore, a Union des producteurs agricoles representative, Michel Simon as well as from the MEF, Michel Morrisette have given an overview of the particular regional problematic. "The conferences have met their objectives. They have generated many questions making this a very worthwhile

## READINGS

### Plants that are Likely to be Recognized as Vulnerable or Threatened Species of the Lagoon from Havre aux Basques, Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Gagnon, J., G. Lavoie, G. Jolicœur et F. Boudreau. 1995. Les plantes susceptibles d'être désignées menacées ou vulnérables de la lagune du Havre aux Basques, Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune du Québec, Direction de la conservation et du patrimoine écologique. 25 p.

An survey of plants which are likely to be recognized as threatened or vulnerable species has been made in the lagoon of Havre aux Basques, Îles-de-la-Madeleine, in order to determine their habitat, distribution and abundance. Five species with a priority status have been listed: *Aster laurentianus*, *Bidens heterodoxa*, *Corema conradii*, *Hudsonia tomentosa* and *Triglochin gaspense*. In all of Québec, the first three species are indigenous to the Îles-de-la-Madeleine. It is worth mentioning that this inventory is done in the hopes of reopening the lagoon.

### Hazardous Wastes (St. Lawrence Technologies Information Form)

Environment Canada. 1994. Hazardous Wastes. St. Lawrence Technologies Information Form. Technological Development Section, Environment Canada.

This information form gives an inventory of recovery and recycling technologies for the mercury in discarded lamps and spent batteries. It also offers recommendations for technologies best suited for Québec. The contents of this form is the result of a study financed by Environment Canada, the ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune du Québec and Hydro-Québec. Produced by the firm Roche Itée, the study has generated a list of 35 mercurial residue processing technologies.

activity. Specifically, Michel Morrissette of the MEF has stirred up a lot of interest. His seminar on the normative aspects of the septic tanks was greatly appreciated", mentions Yolaine St-Jacques, St. Lawrence Centre coordinator. Three workshops on the uses, environmental contamination and wildlife habitats took place the following afternoon.

### Essential Assets for the Future

The three workshops, respectively headed by Jean Burton from the St. Lawrence Centre, Francine Richard from the ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune du Québec, and Pierre Mousseau, also from the St. Lawrence Centre, have given citizens and representatives from various organizations—environmental groups, municipalities, industries, other socio-economic groups—the opportunity to voice their concerns and to define intervention priorities.

Among the general concerns raised during the workshops, 21 priorities have been targeted, 7 for each workshop. According to the people of the community most directly involved, the major concerns that ensued from these workshops are: the implementation of laws governing the use of privately-owned yachts, the removal of tire-made breakwater at the Baies-des-Brises, the inspection of septic tanks with respect to the current guidelines, the

analysis of the water-quality along the shores of Saint-Anicet, the development of an interpretation center as well as the prohibition of wildlife removal on Lake Saint-François' Wildlife National Reserve and the conservation of unprotected wetlands.

A fourth workshop, entitled Vision 2020, simultaneously targeting aspects of uses, contamination and habitats of the St. Lawrence was presented and recommended by Philippe Crabbé of Ottawa University, in the

framework of a university research project. The two aspects of this workshop deemed priorities are the creation of a sustainable and economically efficient tourism as well as a well-structured regional development.

With the 21 priorities and the general concerns noted during this consultation, the Haut Saint-Laurent ZIP committee has now the essential assets to initiate one of its most important phase; i.e. the development and implementation of an Ecological Rehabilitation Action Plan for Lake Saint-François. The ZIP committee has two years before filing its Ecological Rehabilitation Action Plan. This plan, as its name implies, will include the various proposed actions, following the recommendations raised during the consultation, in order to facilitate the restoration of the St. Lawrence.



Francine Paupard

The discussion group of Saturday February 11. From left to right: François Simon, Michel Morrissette, Paul Benoit, Pierre Fournier (stand up), Ann Jourdain, Marie-José Auclair, Jean Burton (coordinator/animator)

### Zones of Primary Intervention Program

# A Program which Encourages Community Action

In the ZIP program, there are two concepts that are particularly important: "knowledge" and "action plan". By acquiring a more complete understanding of the St. Lawrence River, it then becomes possible to better orchestrate local actions. "We can rely on a more active participation from the communities involved, in the management of the St. Lawrence environment and in the

development of innovative solutions", points out Jean Burton of the Community Involvement Harmonization Committee, Environment Canada, St. Lawrence Centre.

### Steadfast Parties

The commitment of several federal and provincial departments in the ZIP program is essential. The departments for the federal government

are: Environment Canada, Fisheries & Oceans Canada, and Health Canada, and for the provincial government: the ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune du Québec and the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec. This program, which had already been well-established in the SLAP framework, has the challenge of setting up

a dialogue between departments.

But the ZIP program is more than a dialogue between governments, it is also a partnership of excellence with Stratégies Saint-Laurent (SSL) and the ZIP committees. In operation since 1989, SSL has the ultimate purpose of inciting citizens to define concrete measures

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of management, follow-up and restoration of the St. Lawrence. Non-profit organization incorporated since 1994, SSL inc. is financed for the most part by SLV 2000 funds and now serves as the official interface between governmental partners and ZIP committees in the framework of the ZIP program. It particularly coordinates ZIP committee activities and provides them all the necessary services maintaining a certain coherence in actions taken with respect to the St. Lawrence River. An agreement framework establishing the contribution of the various players involved was recently signed between Saint-Laurent Vision 2000 and Stratégies Saint-Laurent.

ZIP Committees are created everywhere where they are deemed necessary by local interests. They are made-up of individuals from socio-economical and socio-community areas, municipalities, industries, environmental groups and citizens, whose main purpose is to voice the users' concerns and to encourage the undertaking of appropriate actions. Each ZIP Committee and its corresponding zone first have to be approved by SSL. There are currently nine ZIP Committees: Baie-Comeau, Baie-des-Chaleurs, Est de Montréal, La Baie, Haut Saint-Laurent, Lake Saint-Pierre, Québec, Alma-Jonquière and Ville-Marie.

### A Three-stage Process

The ZIP Program is divided into three main stages: the knowledge assessment report, the public consultation and the Ecological Rehabilitation Action Plan. In order to better coordinate the knowledge assessment report, the St. Lawrence River has first been subdivided in 13 areas of study. The filing of a knowledge assessment report for a given area of study serves as a basis for the unfolding of the subsequent program stages. In a joint effort from federal and provincial department specialists, data on biological, physico-chemical and socio-economical aspects for this area of study are made available through three technical reports. A report on the health of riparian populations will soon be added to these first three. A regional information report summarizing aspects presented in these reports

will then be produced and made public during an official launching. Up until now, three reports have been filed, those of Lakes Saint-Pierre, Saint-Louis and Saint-François. Only the Lake Saint-François report has been produced in accordance to the SLV 2000 framework.

The public consultation, organized by a ZIP committee for a given area of study, takes the shape of a conference where all riparian community citizens are encouraged to discuss the contents of the knowledge assessment report and to define intervention priorities. As for the Ecological Rehabilitation Action Plan, it outlines appropriate citizen actions defined by the priorities noted during the consultation. The ZIP committee or committees involved in a given area of study develop the Ecological Rehabilitation Action Plan in concert with the regional parties involved. The Community Interaction program created by the Community Involvement Component of the Harmonization Committee provides financial and technical support to local communities in organizing public consultations as well as developing and implementing Ecological Rehabilitation Action Plans.

The ZIP program is an endeavor of great value where the interests of St. Lawrence users and those of federal and provincial departments come together. It emphasizes the current understanding on the various sections of the St. Lawrence and encourages or motivates the implementation of concrete actions destined to reestablish and preserve the River, with a view to sustainable development.

#### THE 13 AREAS OF STUDY OF THE ZIP PROGRAM

Lake Saint-François  
 Valleyfield - Beauharnois  
 Lake Saint-Louis  
 Bassins de La Prairie  
 Montréal - Longueuil  
 Varennes - Contrecoeur  
 Lake Saint-Pierre  
 Trois-Rivières - Bécancour  
 Québec - Lévis  
 Upper Estuary  
 Saguenay River  
 Lower Estuary  
 Gulf of St. Lawrence  
 and Chaleurs Bay

## MILIEUS

### Société d'Aménagement de la Baie Lavallière

To protect, restore and develop St. Lawrence wetlands, these are major environmental actions for the preservation of our great River's biological diversity. The Société d'Aménagement de la Baie Lavallière (SABL), a non-profit organization, incorporated in May 1989, has as its first mandate the protection of the most developed marsh in eastern Canada: Baie Lavallière. As early as 1990, the SABL submitted a development project for the bay and, in the spring of 1994, it became a privileged partner of the ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune du Québec in managing environmental and educational-touristic activities of this area.

The SABL is made up of several volunteer workers from various backgrounds. With their know-how and personal expertise, these people help the SABL in its conservation objectives. They insure the implementation and management of projects having for objective the protection and development of marshes, wet meadows or riparian forests of the St. Lawrence, the conservation of fish or waterfowl habitats, the promotion of educational and touristic components of ecological sites of interest, etc.

In addition to the Baie Lavallière projects, the SABL team has particularly been interested in the restoration of wet meadows of the Saint-Louis River, of the Yamaska commune, and of l'Île Saint-Jean. It is also involved in the protection of Wood Duck and Osprey nesting sites and in the organization of exhibitions having wetlands as a central theme.

Wood Duck restoration in riparian forests of the St. Lawrence are among the SABL's most recent and the most important projects (see file). Mostly funded by the Community Interaction program of SLV 2000 Community Involvement component, this project is made up of many partners: the SABL, Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Fondation de la faune du Québec and the Canadian Wildlife Service. The introduction of 3,000 to 5,000 nest boxes along the St. Lawrence is the project's primary objective.

## Community Involvement

# Getting the Community in on the Deal!

One of SLV 2000's first objectives is to insure active community participation in carrying out its environmental challenge with a view to sustainable development. "The Community Involvement Component is the only one that satisfies this primary objective," points out Guy Boucher, the Community Involvement Harmonization Committee cochairperson for Québec. It is the only SLV 2000 component that directly concerns the community. It gives the community the opportunity to undertake concrete actions through projects aimed at cleaning-up the River and giving it a fighting chance. Through SLV 2000, it is now time to act."

## Taking Charge: a Necessity

"If one wants an action plan such as SLV 2000 to give long-term beneficial and tangible results, it is necessary for people to realize just how important the St. Lawrence River is, so as to solicit an active participation in its restoration. We are finally taking charge. It is useless to pursue this idea of continually rectifying, restoring, or intervening on the fluvial ecosystem. It is absurd! As a result, everyone must contribute and actively commit oneself. On our part, we are committed to stimulate, encourage, and support this endeavor," says Albin Tremblay, the Community Involvement Harmonization Committee cochairperson for Canada.

It is interesting to note that more than 60% of the population of Québec lives along the St. Lawrence. Half of these people draw from it their drinking water. This explains the importance for riparian communities to acquire a deeper understanding of the composition, the functioning, and the vulnerability of the St. Lawrence ecosystem and their role in its conservation.

"For SLV 2000, riparian populations, as well as community organizations, are privileged parties. They have to get involved. These people know specific aspects about their River. In addition, they can identify local problems and help

resolve them," adds Albin Tremblay.

## The ZIPs: It begins!

Currently, the members of the Zones of Primary Intervention program are devoting most of their time at coordinating and carrying out local consultations which aim at the development of action plans and ecological recovery of priority zones. ZIP consultations have begun in February with the Saint-François area of study. This will continue in the months to come," asserts Mr. Tremblay.

## The Community Interaction program

# The Technical and Financial Assistance for Local Projects

To stimulate and encourage public participation in the development and implementation of projects whose main goal is to conserve, restore and enhance the resources of the St. Lawrence and priority tributaries, this is an ambitious yet inevitable goal compelling citizens

to take the proper initiatives regarding their River.

This is the goal that SLV 2000 targets. It does so by taking action in the Community Interaction program framework that offers the financial and technical support for the implementation of

projects concerning the St. Lawrence or some tributaries. The program addresses all non-profit and nongovernmental organizations, legally recognized and whose main office is in Québec.

Admissible projects have to offer and implement new initiatives which are

likely to improve, in a tangible manner, the St. Lawrence ecosystem and tributaries. "The provisional report made after almost one year of existence is very encouraging," mentions Daniel Robitaille, biologist and member of the Community Interaction

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program. Up until now, more than \$613,000 have been invested in the implementation of 29 projects whose total value exceeds \$1,295,000. We have set for ourselves an annual goal of 35 projects. And at this time, 32 new projects are being evaluated. Results should

be made public near the end of March. We have, therefore, every reason to believe that our goal will be reached and perhaps even surpassed."

The projects received so far are very different. "They consist, for the most part, of studies

which would add the finishing touches to an action project, but they also concern projects for the conservation, restoration and development of the St. Lawrence riverbanks and its habitats and this, throughout SLV 2000 intervention territory. Activities aimed

at cleaning-up, stabilizing and the re-introducing plant life along the riverbanks of the St. Lawrence and certain specific tributaries have also been undertaken. We tend to favor concrete action projects rather than simple studies," says Daniel Robitaille.

## The Restoration of the Wood Duck in Several St. Lawrence Wetland Habitats

**B**ecause of the extensive disappearance of mature forest in wetland areas and in floodplain nesting areas, the Wood Duck, a freshwater species, nests in tree holes and has been considered, since the end of the 1950s, as an endangered species. In order to insure the preservation of this species along the St.-Lawrence corridor, SLV 2000's Community Interaction program has given \$98,500 to the Société d'Aménagement de la Baie



A Female Wood Duck in a nest box built to preserve this species along the St. Lawrence.

Lavallière. With a total of \$139,000, the project will allow, during the next two years, the establishment of 3000 to 5000 nest boxes along the St. Lawrence. This is done so as to preserve the biodiversity of these habitats and to better coordinate, within the current network, the various local management projects already undertaken by the various community groups.

## Habitat Restoration with the Help of the American Dune Grass in the Regional Park of Pointe-aux-Outardes

**T**he marine climate and the diversity of habitats found in the Regional Park of Point-aux-Outardes, west of Baie-Comeau, make it one of the best sites for bird watching in eastern Canada. Unfortunately, its powerful ecological appeal has its drawback. In fact, this site and more specifically its sand dunes undergo tremendous pressures as a result of repeated assaults from pedestrians and from all-terrain vehicles.

The Corporation of the Regional Park of Point-aux-Outardes has therefore launched a dune

restoration and protection project. With a total of \$22,911, from which \$9,683 come from the Community Interaction program, it has planted 40,000 American Dune Grass seedlings on 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> of dune area and has implemented access control to the site. It even has the legal right to forbid access to all-terrain vehicles. Efforts provided by the Corporation and its many volunteer workers are directed at ending the destruction of a habitat deemed fragile and important along the St. Lawrence.

# A Framework Agreement

(continued from page 1)

The Agreement also defines specific responsibilities for these partners in the development of the different stages of the program.

By signing this Agreement, provincial and federal governments are committed to offer financial and technical support for the development of several program activities and to make the information for the different sections of the St. Lawrence River available to all.

Stratégies Saint-Laurent is committed to promote the ZIP program to the riparian community, produce and insure the smooth running of ZIP committees, serve as the link between ZIP committees and governmental partners, and contribute in the elaboration and completion of plans and other associated governmental programs.

The Martin Budget

## Little Impact on SLV 2000

In Québec, the Saint-Laurent Vision 2000 is a priority environmental action plan. Interestingly, the necessary program review following the last federal budget will not significantly affect its contents. "The primary objectives will be maintained and the agreement that we have with the government of Québec will be honored" as mentioned by Jean-Pierre Gauthier, cochairperson of the Agreement for Canada. Although some activity and program readjustments will be necessary to accommodate budget reductions, the primary objectives of the seven components will not be re-evaluated.

The cumulative budgetary reduction of 16.5% spread out over three years will not affect SLV 2000's main projects, such as the reduction of toxic substances and agricultural pollution, the recovery of the beluga, the conservation of 7000 hectares of wildlife habitats, the restoration of the smelt population in the Boyer River, the environmental reports of

ZIP committees will coordinate meetings for members, will assist in communicating regional preoccupations and will encourage the development of appropriate solutions.

### An Essential Push in the Right Direction

Over the next three years Stratégies Saint-Laurent will receive funding in the order of 1.3 million dollars. This money will serve to support Stratégies Saint-Laurent's operating costs, but more importantly, to coordinate program activities and to insure the smooth running of the nine established ZIP committees and the two others, soon to follow. We are already preparing to file, this coming May, a new knowledge assessment report, the report for the Montréal-Longueuil region. The ZIP committee of eastern Montréal will coordinate the public consultation.

both the ZIP program and the current environmental state of the St. Lawrence as well as the implementation of programs involving health and community participation in the protection and restoration of the St. Lawrence River.

The already well-established Canada/Québec cooperation and the implementation of harmonization programs and activities will therefore proceed as currently planned. Federal/provincial teams will create, following this endeavor, a more efficient organization centered on the current major environmental problems. The cochairperson of the Agreement for Québec, Denys Jean, is very happy with this turn of events.

The protection of the environment, especially of the St. Lawrence ecosystem, will continue to be a priority. It will include contributions from highly qualified personnel, committed people and avant-garde technologies.

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(418) 648-3391

### Readings

To receive the document on plants that are likely to be recognized as vulnerable or threatened species of the lagoon from Havre aux Basques, Îles-de-la-Madelaine, contact MEF's Mr. Gildo Lavoie at (418) 644-6731

To receive a St. Lawrence Technologies Information Form on hazardous wastes write to:

Technological Development Branch  
Environnement Canada  
685 Cathcart, 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Montréal (Québec)  
H3B 1M6  
Ph: (514) 283-9274

### Milieus

Rodrigue Shooner, chairperson  
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(514) 742-5716

# AGENDA

## The St. Lawrence and Health... A time to act

In the framework of SLV 2000's Health Component, the Comité de santé environnementale du Québec in collaboration with the Union québécoise pour la conservation de la nature (UQCN) are organizing the conference "Le Saint-Laurent et la santé... le temps d'agir". This conference will be held on April 25 and 26 at Auditorium of the Québec Museum.

Through seminars and workshops, the conference plans to review the different public health projects completed and those in progress in the SLV 2000 framework. It also plans to specify the role of nongovernmental organization in such projects and to

encourage the setting-up of projects involving several partners along the St. Lawrence. To find out more on these activities, contact l'UQCN at (418) 648-2104. There are no registration fees.

## Biosphere

In June, the Biosphere of Parc des Îles (Montréal) will be opened to visitors. The Biosphere is devoted to the conservation of water and the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes ecosystem. In the Biosphere, people from all walks of life will have the opportunity to witness the most recent scientific developments in water management, and more particularly those related to the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes ecosystem.

# IN BRIEF

## A Noon-conference

Last April 7, the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières chemistry-biology department had organized a noon-conference during which Michel Huot of the Direction générale de la ressource faunique et des parcs of the MEF has given a conference on the Law concerning vulnerable and threatened species.

## International Council for the exploration of the sea

In Copenhagen, from April 3 to 13, the International Council for the exploration of the sea held its

annual meeting. François Caron of the Direction générale de la ressource faunique et des parcs of the MEF has presented a report on the salmon situation in the Atlantic.

## Le fleuve aux grandes eaux

The famous illustrator Frédéric Back has recently made reproductions of the St. Lawrence River through "Le fleuve aux grandes eaux" theme. Two gift sets containing four reproductions. A video is also available.

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