

Environmental Monitoring Advisory Committee (EMAC)

Progress Report #10 – September 28, 2012 Meeting

NOTE: EMAC Progress Reports provide an update on the activities of EMAC but do not include a record of internal discussions at EMAC meetings which are confidential to the Committee and FORCE. The Terms of Reference and a list of EMAC Members are available on the FORCE Website at: www.fundyforce.ca.

The 10th Meeting of EMAC was held on Friday September 28, 2012 at the Minas Basin Development Center in Hantsport, NS. The following participated:

Attendees:

- Gordon Beanlands – Chair
- Don Aldous
- Michael Brylinsky
- Allyn Clarke
- Graham Daborn
- Donald Gordon
- Andrew Hebda
- Robert Miller
- Melissa Nevin
- Mark Taylor

Joe Kozak , FORCE (Secretariat)
Donald Humphrey, DFO (Observer)
Anna Redden, Acadia University (Observer)
Steve Sanford, NS Environment (Observer)

Meeting Summary/Highlights:

- Gordon Beanlands welcomed the Committee members and noted that the objectives were to discuss the DFO comments on the EEM report and the possible organization of a fish-turbine interaction workshop.
- A FORCE project update was provided which indicated that dry runs for the cable deployment barge system were completed in August 2012 and that additional trials may be required before cable deployment. A cable deployment is still possible in 2012 and at this time a turbine may be deployed in 2013. It was also noted that the Government of Canada has approved \$5 million (with matching funds from FORCE) for a sensor platform to test monitoring instrumentation in high flow conditions of the Minas Passage. The initial step is an engineering feasibility study to determine whether or not to proceed with the sensor project.
- Donald Humphrey provided an update on the DFO Marine Renewable Energy (MRE) Pathways of Effects Project, which is focused on identifying the major regulatory decision points related to

MRE future development. The project is essentially complete, but no final report is available at this time. He also updated the Committee on the 2012 federal budget bill, Bill C-38, which contains changes to environmental legislation, including the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) and minor amendments to the Fisheries Act. Further information on these changes will be provided to EMAC when they come into effect and supporting regulations and policies are finalized.

- The available 2011 EEM reports were previously distributed to EMAC, including the EMF report and the Acoustics (Marine Noise) report, and these were briefly discussed. These reports, along with other EEM reports, will be included in the 2nd EEM report. It is anticipated that the 2nd EEM report will be available in 2013 after review by EMAC and an external reviewer. A summary table of studies undertaken in 2011 and 2012, and which may be to be continued in 2013, was provided to EMAC. The EMAC Subcommittee on weir fisheries, established at the last EMAC meeting, provided an update on progress and indicated that a study will likely proceed in 2013.
- There was a general discussion regarding key areas for research and how EMAC might influence the broader research agenda. It was agreed that the major monitoring gap is related to fish and mammals interaction with turbines, i.e. strikes, avoidance behavior. It was suggested that a small workshop be organized by FORCE to address this topic. But it was agreed to postpone a workshop decision, until after the Dublin Conference which Anna Redden and Graham Daborn will be attending in October 2012. As well, EMAC also asked Robert Miller and Allyn Clarke to prepare one-pagers on other possible research approaches on fish –turbine interactions.
- EMAC was asked for advice on DFO's comments on FORCE's 1st EEM report, especially in relation to further fish echo-sounder surveys and lobster movement studies. It was recommended that FORCE meet with DFO to clarify their suggested next steps. The Committee will review and discuss the EEM program for 2013 at its next meeting, with the understanding that there may be no turbine at the FORCE site until late 2013 or later. The continuation of the lobster tracking project was discussed and Acadia University will be asked to submit a proposal for FORCE.

Next Meeting

- The next EMAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday March 20th, 2013.