



## **Sustainable Development: a question of values**

Through the “Together for a Sustainable Future” project, elected officials, socio-economic players and the population at large in the Gaspesia and Magdalen Islands region will acquire a regional concerted vision of sustainable development. This exercise in creating a common vision is influenced by the values of the people who live and develop this region. It must look at the long term.

Before deciding on a common vision, we must identify the values that are important to us. These values represent standards, beliefs, and convictions that are part of our very fabric and that relate to our way of living here and developing our region. A vision is underlined by a set of values that give us a fundamental direction and draws together all stakeholders.

More precisely, a concerted vision of sustainable development for our region will reflect the ideal environment where we would like to live. Also, it takes into account the wishes and desires of the community. It is the result of a mental voyage that begins in a familiar place to explore the unknown and brings us to conceive of a future that takes into account the current situation, the facts, the hopes, the fears and the possibilities. It allows us to give meaning to what we are doing today, for the future.

In other words, this exercise will give us a mental image of the Gaspesia Region in 25 years, or 50 years or more.

During the conference on sustainable development in Gaspesia and Magdalen Islands held in the city of Gaspé on May 18 and 19, 2006, workshops identified many values dear to the participants. We must take this information into account when we adopt a concerted vision of sustainable development. The values identified are as follows:

- good quality of life
- respect
- intergenerational sharing
- quality of the landscapes
- feeling of belonging
- autonomy
- long term vision
- employment, employability
- confidence
- intercultural openness
- giving prominence to heritage (natural, architectural and human)
- family
- universal access to services
- return to traditional values

These values are not in order of importance. Far from being complete and unalterable, this list of values can change over time depending on each person. For this exercise, these values should be reflected in the common vision of sustainable development that we will adopt.