

Sustainable Development Consultation Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands

Project « Ensemble pour un avenir durable »
CREGÎM (Conseil régional de l'environnement de la Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine)

In collaboration with

Gaspesian CEDEC (Community Economic Development and Employability Committee)

and

CASA (Committee for Anglophone Social Action)

The following topics will be addressed during this consultation on sustainable development for the Gaspé:

- Looking ahead 25 years, how would you describe the “perfect” Gaspé?
- How can we assure this vision at the local level?
- What challenges and obstacles are standing in the way of this vision?
- What are the strengths we can depend on and the weakness we must remedy to ensure sustainable development?
- What tools and methods should we develop to implement sustainable development in the region?
- Can you identify practices, projects or existing structures in your organization or community that already respond to sustainable development principles?

January 24, 2007 at the Galgosiet Centre, Gesgapegiag

Statements:

- Environment should be priority before social and economic factors
- Selling of resources must stop
- Control regionally, even by municipality
- Education should be a priority for youth, it is important to remember our heritage
- Distance education should be more available to ensure informed leaders for tomorrow. If everyone leaves the region to pursue education, then the knowledge and informed leadership leaves.

- Mi'kmaq community have had to fight for education, local control of resources, etc, it has been an uphill battle. First nations should have more control of land and have decisional powers in the region. Utopian vision is to have an equitable share of resources.
- First nations youth are now coming home with skills and knowledge, with a large portion of the community now in university
- Chief Martin read a statement supplying history and desires of the Mi'kmaq community.
- He mentioned that it was not only multi-nationals which are destroying the environment, organizations such as Tembeq, GDS, St. Alphonse Mill contribute as well.
- Open to Co-management of resources on Mi'kmaq land
- Suggested that English-speaking community could offer more support by asking the government to recognize the need to resolve issue of title lands

- Discussion of the negative aspects of wind energy

- Provincial strategies should be adapted to the region, even by MRC.

- Region should be promoted as a “culturally, environmentally-friendly region”

- There is a need for a regional environment watchdog.

- Much discussion on the lack of communication between the French community and English & First Nations communities. Chief Martin expressed his feelings that there is a promotion against anything Mi'kmaq.
- Chief Martin stated their priorities were: support needed for their suggestions of co-management, a seat on decision-making bodies and input into policy development.
- V. Gilker stated that CEDEC/CASA should work to encourage all organizations to include 3 cultures.
- It was suggested that the Eastern Shores School Board should offer history courses on Mi'kmaq culture.
- Chief Martin suggested that CREGIM adopt a code or recital recognizing peoples of the Gaspé, taking into account language, history, values and beliefs.

January 31, 2007 at the Douglas Community Centre

How do we English-speakers envision the Gaspé in 25 years time?

- Control of our resources
- Keep young here; opportunity to work
- Assisted living seniors' residence
- Housing shortage in Gaspé
- No job to sustain cost of housing
- Knowledge of region necessary to have youth commit to stay here and see opportunities
- Business sense for youth – create a working environment
- Need more trades
- English community apathetic
- Few Anglos registering to take FSL (French Second Language training)
- No land available to build
- Job/industry – high tech jobs (computer-based) hold potential – Parks Canada could offer many more opportunities
- Three cultures cooperation/could give us a stronger voice
- New people/new ideas – new motivation

Question: What cultural activities/sports are there for English speakers?

- Need volunteers
- Good example of Douglas Community Centre
- Need to be jump started
- More and more ESC is requested to sit on boards, etc. Difficult to find Anglophones to represent us.
- ESC population increasingly bilingual
- Develop new industries (ex.: mining, wind energy)
- Wind energy: situation in 25 years; money (royalties) leaving the region
- Green vocation (ex.: organic farming, Val d'Espoir experience; Farmers' markets)
- Opportunities associated with global warming
- Bureaucracy in Québec = a deterrent
- Use ESC communities to market the region
- Expatriate Gaspésians would love to come home

ESC Strengths:

- pride in region, willing to settle for a little less, family, landscape, attachment to heritage
- We speak French and English – makes good business sense to communicate this
- Tourism opportunity – English Gaspésian circuit
- English services have improved a great deal in recent years

ESC Weaknesses:

- Compliance (ex.: Parc Forillon “big waste”, could have been a bona fide Heritage Village)
- Should advertise bilingual aspect
- Not selling English community
- Tourism: 1960’s – 70% were US tourists – changing road signs big mistake
- English service available but not advertised
- Francophones do not support GBHV, Bluegrass festival, etc./Many visitors come from outside Québec
- Question: Do Francophones want to work with us?
- Effort lacking from Francophones to involve ESC
- Relations with French or Mi’gmaq an important topic for ESC in Baie-des-Chaleurs area
- Government representation not considered good
- Could we develop an award system to recognize efforts to serve ESC in English?
- Fondation communautaire –example of programs ESC could access but not familiar with
- Educate youth
- Develop area better (in means of communications)
- Infrastructure/communications improvement needed (high-speed internet/cellphone service/transportation)
- More jobs
- Need to offer resources to encourage people to come
- Get people involved (esp. youth)
- Sell ourselves
- Promote bilingual status
- Promote area
- Biggest producers of ESC human resources = field of education. (We educate our youth for export).
- Common vision to be developed
- We wish ESC could speak with one voice, positive strides are being made.

January 24, 2007 – Gesgapegiag

Animation and organisation

Guillaume Dufour	CREGÎM
Valery Gilker	CEDEC
Kim Harrison	CASA

Participants

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January 31, 2007 – Douglstown

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