



Membertou

RE: Written comments regarding Call for Bids on Eastern Scotian Shelf of NS (NS13-1)

Membertou First Nation has concerns about the current call for bids for seismic testing that will occur in 2014 and 2015 in the Eastern Scotian shelf of Canada. Our prime fishing grounds are situated directly where you propose to do seismic testing. We feel there is too much uncertainty in regards to the effects of seismic testing on Groundfish, shrimp and snow crab that may impact our community's dependence on the revenues generated from those fisheries. Current studies are inconclusive as to the effects on the species behavioural patterns, reproductive patterns or impacts on larvae and fish eggs.

Even though the CNSOPB does not feel that there is any correlation between the decline of fisheries and seismic activity the absence of proof in either direction leads to the possibility that the correlation may be there. The Alaska Marine Conservation Council "found that seismic surveys have been found to kill adult fish as well as larvae and fish eggs." They also found that "Seismic surveys can cause physical damage to fish ears and other tissues and organs such as swim bladders. Although such effects may not kill fish immediately, they may lead to reduced fitness, which increases their susceptibility to predation and decreases their ability to carry out important life processes."

The DFO CSAS report on Impacts of Seismic Sound on Fish, Invertebrates, Marine Turtles and Marine Mammals found that differences in experimental regimes and lack of adequate controls in some of the experiments means that the published results are an insufficient basis to predict the nature of any change that may occur, or even if a change will occur" and that "effects of seismic sounds on behavioural functions and sensory perception of fish and invertebrate eggs and larvae are unknown." The DFO CSAS report also states that "there is a specific absence of information on the effects on seismic sounds on moulting of invertebrates with hard exoskeletons".

Therefore, with so many uncertainties we feel that more testing on the effects of seismic testing needs to be done to guarantee that no harm will come to our fisheries and no financial loss will occur within our community as a result of seismic testing.

Seismic testing effects may be debatable; one thing that is not debatable is the potential for oil and gas disasters. Our community depends on that revenue to fund essential services within the community and do not want to jeopardize in any way that.

Membertou depends on the Eastern Scotian Shelf where you plan on doing seismic testing and potentially oil and gas development so we would like to reiterate our concerns and have more testing done to guarantee that our community's fisheries will not be affected and if it does we will be compensated until the fisheries return to catch rates that we currently enjoy.

Membertou Commercial Fisheries
Hubert Nicholas

WELCOMING THE WORLD!