

Solidarité Gaspésie and La Planète s'invite au Parlement-Gaspé oppose the lawsuit brought by the petroleum company Gaspé Énergies against the Ministère de l'Énergie et des Ressources naturelles du Québec (MERN).

GASPÉ, March 1, 2021: The citizens groups Solidarité Gaspésie and La Planète s'invite au Parlement-Gaspé oppose the lawsuit brought by Gaspé Énergies aimed at obtaining authorization to drill the Galt 6 well. This lawsuit will be heard in the Quebec Superior Court on March 1, 2 and 3, 2021.

Gaspé Énergies, a subsidiary of Utica Resources, filed a motion on February 25, 2020 with the MERN for an authorization to drill the Galt 6 well, located about 20 kilometers west of Gaspé. On October 13, 2020, the Minister Jonathan Julien served notice to the company of his refusal to issue such a permit to drill based on the risks to the integrity and the conservation of the water environment related to the well site.

Following this response, Gaspé Énergies filed, on October 29, 2020, a request to challenge the Minister's decision in the Quebec Superior Court. **In addition to seeking a reversal of the Minister's decision to refuse a drilling authorization, the company is seeking to invalidate section 23 of the onshore petroleum exploration, production and storage operations regulation.** This section stipulates that an oil drilling site shall not be established within 1000 metres of a water body, unless approved by the Minister in this regard. The eventual invalidation of section 23 by the Court would result in a significant weakening of the few elements of an environmental nature included in the Petroleum Resources Act that came into effect in 2018.

An **independent hydrogeological study** was conducted in 2016 for the Galt 6 well, which confirmed:

- The location of the Petite Fourche River less than 800 meters from the projected well site;
- The presence of a risk to the water environment due to the nature of the aquifer. In fact, Galt 6 would be located in an area where the water environment is very vulnerable to surface contamination.

The following should also be noted about the overall Galt project:

- There is a **lack of clearly demonstrated social acceptance**, particularly on the part of the populations concerned, with regard to this project;
- Gaspé Énergies is a subsidiary of Utica Resources. The latter **is a foreign speculative fund with its head office in Vienna (Austria)** that holds a strong majority of the company's capital. We are facing an economic player whose financial interests may be far removed from the development concerns of our territory and the Gaspésie;
- The Government of Quebec has so far **lost a significant amount of funds to the predecessors of Gaspé Énergies and Utica Resources;**

- The Galt project and, more broadly, the establishment of a hydrocarbons industry in Quebec are based on a type of development that is incompatible with the implementation of an equitable energy transition and a truly sustainable development approach.

The acceptability of such a sector is therefore not present.

In view of the above, the citizens groups Solidarité Gaspésie, La Planète s'invite au Parlement-Gaspé, as well as many other citizens **are asking**:

- **Minister Jonathan Julien to maintain his refusal to authorize the drilling of the Galt 6 well;**
- **The maintenance of section 23 of the Regulation concerning the exploration, production and storage of onshore hydrocarbons;**
- **The withdrawal of *Ressources Québec investments* in the Galt project and, no doubt incidentally, in the lawsuit of Gaspé Énergies;**
- **The complete and definitive termination of the Galt project.**

Various actions will be undertaken over the next few days and weeks: in the short term, participation in the Superior Court hearings: a rally will be held on Wednesday at noon, March 3, in Gaspé, on the land adjacent to the city's billboard. We invite you to attend the meeting in compliance with current sanitary measures, i.e., wearing face cover and maintaining a physical distance of 2 meters between participants.

A daily press briefing will make it possible to take stock of the previous days' hearings between 9:00 am to 9:30 am, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in the virtual room at <https://meet.google.com/jwd-mhkq-jda>

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