

Motion to Oppose the Plan Nord

Whereas in May 2011, Jean Charest's Liberal government introduced a 25-year plan to exploit the resources of Northern Quebec, covering 1.2 million square kilometers above the 49th parallel including James Bay, Nunavik, and the North Shore by investing \$80 billion in public and private money towards mining, logging, the construction of dams, and the building of infrastructure to support these activities; ¹

Whereas First Nations including but not limited to the Inuit, the Innu, the Cree, the Naskapis of Schefferville, the Algonquin, and the Atikamekw,¹ have voiced concerns about the Plan;

Whereas members of these First Nations communities have expressed their opposition to the Plan through direct actions, such as when Innu activists blockaded highway 138 in protest of the La Romaine Hydroelectric Complex megaproject; ²

Whereas many environmental groups ^{3,4} have criticized the Plan Nord's destructive policies such as deforestation (only 10 per cent of forests are to be protected, ¹ and the development will have devastating ecological and human consequences ^{5,6}) and the building infrastructure to allow exploitation;

Whereas the Plan Nord violates the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, impeding on indigenous communities' lands and right to hunt, harvest, fish, and trap in these regions; ⁷

Whereas McGill University has deep ties to the Plan Nord, including investments in 11 companies lobbying for the Plan, at least 5 out of 25 Board members involved in promoting the Plan, and at least one law firm that lobbies for the Plan; ⁸

Whereas the AUS does not currently have a mandate to specifically oppose the Plan Nord;

Resolved that the AUS actively oppose Plan Nord as a form of continued colonialism on unceded indigenous lands.

Resolved that the AUS cut ties with firms and corporations that profit from, lobby for, or are members of professional organizations or interest groups that lobby for the Plan Nord.

Resolved that the AUS work to support indigenous communities in their resistance to the Plan Nord by striving to form solidarity networks with these communities and others that already work with them.

Resolved that the AUS do this by allocating resources, educating community members, producing informative materials, and pressuring the McGill administration to divest its holdings in companies profiting from or lobbying for the Plan Nord.

References

¹ <http://rabble.ca/news/2012/04/jean-charests-destructive-plan-nord>

² <http://www.indigenoussolidaritymontreal.net/press-release-leading-indigenous-opponents-of-plan-nord-to-hold-press-conference-to-challenge-business-convention>

³ http://www.naturequebec.org/fichiers/Aires_protegees/C012-10-02_NouveauPlanNord.pdf

⁴ <http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/fr/campagnes/Forets/foret-boreale/a-vous-dagir/gel-du-plan-nord/>

⁵ <http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/fr/Blog/rapport-confidentiel-plan-nord-et-coupe-fore/blog/41953/>

⁶ <http://thelinknewspaper.ca/article/3254>

⁷ <http://www.mcgilldaily.com/2012/10/still-we-colonize/>

⁸ Political Campaign Coordinator of the SSMU research, available upon request [christopher.bangs@mail.mcgill.ca].

Moved by

Claire Stewart-Kanigan

James Gutman

Jacqueline Brandon

Shaina Agbayani

Isaac Stethem