



## Environmental groups request federal impact assessment for Goldboro LNG

*Proposed liquefied natural gas facility in Nova Scotia raises both legal and environmental concerns*

**HALIFAX/ TRADITIONAL TERRITORY OF THE MI'KMAQ PEOPLE** – Eight prominent environmental groups from across the country are urging federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change Jonathan Wilkinson and the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada to ensure that Pieridae Energy's proposed Goldboro Liquefied Natural Gas export facility project (Goldboro LNG) undergoes a comprehensive, up-to-date federal impact assessment.

Pieridae Energy is currently looking for nearly \$1 billion in financial support - taxpayer dollars - from the federal government to move this project forward.

Ecojustice lawyers sent a letter on behalf of the groups to the Minister and Agency to that effect on Monday, asking for a response within 90 days.

The project's climate impacts have not yet been subject to federal oversight. According to independent experts, Goldboro LNG alone is expected to increase the present greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions level for Nova Scotia by 18% and projected to cause the province to exceed its 2030 emissions cap by a third.

The potential GHG emissions associated with the project may seriously hinder the ability of both the Government of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada to meet their commitments in respect of climate change, including in the context of Canada's newly increased 2030 and soon-to-be legislated 2050 GHG emissions reduction targets.

The Goldboro LNG project received a provincial environmental assessment and approval in 2014. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the precursor to the current Agency) decided in 2012 that a federal environmental review of the project was not warranted, relying instead on a previous federal assessment for a vastly different project on the same site from 2007. However, the environmental groups argue the Agency lacked statutory authority for this decision, and as such, the project proceeding without proper federal scrutiny has led to a continuing unlawful situation.

The construction of a new liquefied natural gas facility, such as the one proposed for Goldboro, is expressly designated as an activity under the *Physical Activities Regulations* pursuant to the federal *Impact Assessment Act*. As a designated activity, the groups say Goldboro LNG cannot lawfully proceed without a federal impact assessment that must consider updated climate science, GHG emissions reduction commitments, and the economic risks of LNG projects that have greatly evolved since 2007.

The letter was sent by Ecojustice on behalf of Ecology Action Centre, Nova Scotia Fracking Resource and Action Coalition, New Brunswick Anti-Shale Gas Alliance, Sierra Club Canada Foundation, Council of Canadians, Environnement Vert Plus, Citizens' Oil & Gas Council, and Greenpeace Canada. The groups' mandates span Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Alberta, and Canada-wide.

**James Gunvaldsen Klaassen, Lawyer, Ecojustice said:**

"The federal government must assess the proposed Goldboro LNG project under the *Impact Assessment Act*. Without this lawful assessment, our clients are concerned Canadians will not have a clear picture of the project's potential impact to our environment and climate commitments.



"The Agency's previous unlawful decision to use the assessment from a distinct, older project is not an appropriate solution to satisfy assessment requirements for this new project.

"There have been significant advancements in climate science and commitments which need to be taken into account under the IAA."

**Gurprasad Gurumurthy, Energy Coordinator, Renewables and Electricity, Ecology Action Centre said:**

"We're in the midst of a climate emergency and Nova Scotia needs to phase out fossil fuels immediately. Nova Scotia has worked hard to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and approving the Goldboro LNG project would add 3.7 million tonnes each year- setting the province back half a decade.

"We need to find a path forward to achieve 53 percent below 2005 levels, not go in the opposite direction."

**Pascal Bergeron, Spokesperson, Environnement Vert Plus said:**

"When Pieridae merged with the local junior oil company operating in the Gaspé region and on Anticosti Island, Pétrolia, in 2017, the company promised to develop a large part of the Gaspé territory to supply its liquefaction terminal. Our maritime region, whose economy is based on the beauty of the land and the purity of its water, would become a region invaded by the fossil fuel industry.

"Now that Pieridae has announced that it will liquidate its assets in our region, its liquefaction terminal remains a complete environmental nonsense that rests on a gigantic waste of public funds. The botched federal environmental assessment must be reopened to assess the true impacts of the project and prevent public investments. A real environmental assessment could be the end of this nightmare."

**Jim Emberger, Spokesperson, New Brunswick Anti-Shale Gas Alliance, said:**

"The New Brunswick Anti-Shale Gas Alliance recently intervened on the side of the federal government in two appellate courts and at the Supreme Court of Canada on the issue of carbon pricing. It would be very disturbing to see that same federal government negate the climate progress of its win at the Supreme Court by allowing the climate-busting Goldboro LNG project to proceed without an environmental assessment, and, perhaps, even provide funding for the project. If either happens, such hypocrisy and betrayal of promises will be remembered."

**Ken Summers, Spokesperson, Nova Scotia Fracking Resource and Action Coalition said:**

"Goldboro LNG would by itself destroy Nova Scotia's GHG emission reductions. Premier Rankin and other promoters peddle the illusion that it will help in Germany because burning gas emits less carbon than burning coal. But the carbon released in liquefying and transporting LNG makes it like coal - just another extra dirty fossil fuel."

**Patrick Bonin, Climate and Energy Campaigner, Greenpeace Canada said:**

"The Goldboro project is similar to the Quebec LNG project, which has already been rejected on environmental grounds by the governmental agency responsible. The federal government will lose all climate credibility if it gives Goldboro a free-pass to build a new facility that will fuel the climate crisis and is completely counter to the green and just recovery that Canadians are demanding."

**Tynette Deveaux, Communications Coordinator, Sierra Club Atlantic Canada Chapter said:**

"[According to the Government of Canada](#), it is 'committed to achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through a renewed, nation-to-nation, government-to-government, and Inuit-Crown relationship



based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership as the foundation for transformative change.’ How is it possible, then, that it would permit Pieridae Energy to move forward with the [largest project in Nova Scotia’s history](#) on unceded territory of Mi’kmaq people without proper consultation with the Mi’kmaq people?

“Many Mi’kmaq are just now learning about the Pieridae LNG Goldboro project and the proposed construction of a labour camp to house 5000 out-of-area workers. Mi’kmaq women, including Grassroots Grandmothers, oppose this LNG project and ‘man camp.’ They point to the findings of the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and are calling upon all levels of government to halt this camp, which threatens their very safety, and put a stop to this environmentally destructive LNG project on their lands. Mi’kmaq women were not consulted and they did not consent. Sierra Club Canada stands with its Mi’kmaq allies.”

**Angela Giles, Atlantic regional organizer, the Council of Canadians said:**

“This corporation has been lobbying members of the federal government to support the proposed Goldboro LNG project and their near billion-dollar funding request. The federal government has an obligation, through the Impact Assessment Act, to ensure a comprehensive and transparent approval process, including public consultations.

“We also share the serious concerns of Mi’kmaq Grandmothers about the proposed work camp given the [well-documented increase in violence](#) by transient mostly-male workers in similar camps toward Indigenous women and girls. We echo their concerns about continuing to extract fossil fuels, and specifically the connection to Alton Gas and fracking.”

## Background

Pieridae Energy is proposing to build a \$13 billion liquified natural gas plant on Nova Scotia’s Eastern Shore known as Goldboro LNG. If built, the project would see the company bring natural gas from Alberta to Nova Scotia through pipelines. The gas would then be liquified and stored at the Goldboro LNG plant before being shipped overseas to Germany and then to other Western European countries.

According to independent expert Dr. Larry Hughes, the Goldboro LNG plant would blow a hole through Nova Scotia’s emissions ceiling, projecting a greenhouse gas emissions increase of 3.7 megatonnes annually. The province recently stated its commitment to reduce its emissions to 53 per cent of 2005 levels by 2030, however this project will cause Nova Scotia to exceed this emissions cap by about 33 per cent. For the same period and baseline, the federal government recently announced an increased target of 40-45 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. Both jurisdictions have expressed their commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

Pieridae must make a final decision whether to proceed with the project by the end of June. The spokesperson from the company is on the record as saying that it needs a decision from the federal government regarding the \$1 billion in financial support “in the next couple of months”.

On May 3, 2021, Ecojustice launched an [advocacy campaign](#) with a letter to Minister Wilkinson and other federal ministers asking them to reject the company’s request for financial assistance. The letter notes that providing financial assistance to this project would threaten provincial and national climate targets, as well as both jurisdictions’ commitment to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. To date, more than 2,800 Canadians have participated in the action.



## About

[Ecojustice](#) uses the power of the law to defend nature, combat climate change, and fight for a healthy environment. Its strategic, public interest lawsuits and advocacy lead to precedent-setting court decisions and law and policy that deliver lasting solutions to Canada's most urgent environmental problems. As Canada's largest environmental law charity, Ecojustice operates offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, and Halifax.

[The Ecology Action Centre](#) is a member-based environmental charity in Mi'kma'ki (Nova Scotia) taking leadership on critical issues ranging from biodiversity protection to climate change to environmental justice. EAC strives to catalyze change through policy advocacy, community development and acts as a watch-dog for the environment. It takes a holistic approach to the environment and our economy to create a just and sustainable society.

Active for more than 30 years in the Gaspé Peninsula, especially in the Baie-des-Chaleurs, [Environnement Vert Plus](#) campaigns against industrial projects that threaten the integrity of the territory: uranium mines, cement plants, petroleum and gas operations, toxic waste incinerators, etc. EVP also monitors current activities that emit contaminants into the environment, such as municipal waste and wastewater.

Created in 1971, [Greenpeace Canada](#) is an independent campaigning organization that uses peaceful protest and creative communication to expose global environmental problems and promote solutions that are essential to a green and peaceful future. It has offices in over 55 countries, including Canada. Greenpeace has been closely following the LNG file, in particular the GNL-Quebec/Gazoduc project, for over two years. It has participated in all stages of the evaluation of the project by the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) and has written a brief that it presented and that dealt, among other things, with the climate impact of this project. Greenpeace is also collaborating with organisations in Quebec, Canada (particularly in the East) and overseas that are working on the Goldboro file.

[The New Brunswick Anti-Shale Gas Alliance](#) is comprised of both Anglophone and francophone groups from across the province, working closely with our Indigenous friends and allies to oppose unconventional oil and gas, and promote the move to a clean energy economy in order to address climate change.

[NOFRAC, the Nova Scotia Fracking Resource and Action Coalition](#), is a group comprising almost 100 members, representing more than 15 environmental and community organizations. The coalition was formed in December 2010 to share information about the risks of hydraulic fracturing and the development of shale gas in Nova Scotia, and to raise public awareness about the risks of these practices. It is guided by a steering committee of dedicated long-term members who meet regularly to discuss local, provincial and regional issues around fracking and shale gas.

[Sierra Club Canada Foundation](#) is a grassroots organization that helps empower people to protect, restore, and enjoy a healthy and safe environment. Through our local chapters and national network we work to bring the concerns of communities to the attention of regional and national leaders and advocate for positive change.

Since 1985, [The Council of Canadians](#) has brought people together through collective action and grassroots organizing to challenge corporate power and advocate for people, the planet, and our



democracy. Alongside opposing new fossil fuel infrastructure, the Council has also been working for a just transition and a just recovery at a community level.

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