



**PRESS RELEASE  
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## **AFNQL Welcomes Hydro-Québec's Intentions Regarding Wind Energy Projects**

**Wendake, May 31, 2024** — The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) views with interest the announcement made by Michael Sabia, President and CEO of Hydro-Québec, regarding the company's new strategy to become the lead developer of large-scale wind energy projects. This initiative aims to add 10,000 megawatts (MW) of wind capacity by 2035 by developing projects of over 1,000 MW, a significant increase from the current average size of Quebec's wind farms at 90 MW.

"Hydro-Québec's intentions to work in true partnership with the First Nations from the early stages of major wind energy projects are certainly a step in the right direction," stated AFNQL Chief Ghislain Picard. "This approach aligns with our long-held vision of being in the driver's seat when it comes to energy development on our lands."

### **Principles and Expectations of the First Nations**

Hydro-Québec's recent announcement opens an interesting avenue, recognizing the rights of the First Nations over their ancestral lands, including their water resources. However, Indigenous communities are calling for concrete actions to move from words to tangible commitments. Since time immemorial, First Nations have inhabited and governed these territories, holding ancestral rights, including Aboriginal title, which guarantee their use, enjoyment, and possession of the lands, as well as their right to the economic benefits they generate.

To ensure the well-being of their communities and their development, it is imperative that First Nations directly benefit from the returns of energy projects on their lands and waters. They wish to reinvest these benefits according to the priorities and needs they have identified, thus contributing to their socio-economic development. "First Nations want the capacity to create their own wealth. A more detailed analysis of the strategy and the discussions with Hydro-Québec will determine if it meets our governments' desire to be true masters of their own development," emphasized Chief Picard.

The AFNQL welcomes Hydro-Québec's openness and hopes that upcoming discussions will lead to a more inclusive energy development that respects the rights and aspirations of the First Nations.

## **About the AFNQL**

The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador is the regional political organization that brings together the 43 Chiefs of the First Nations in Quebec and Labrador. To find out more, visit the AFNQL website at <https://apnql.com/en/>.

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**Source: Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador**

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