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## *Historic partnership with the Innu Nation*

### **Québec moves forward with the large-scale 200 MW Apuiat wind farm project**

**Québec City, February 4, 2021** – Québec Premier François Legault, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and Minister Responsible for the Côte-Nord Region, Jonatan Julien, the Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs, Ian Lafrenière, the Chief of the Innu Community of Uashat mak Mani-utenam, Mike McKenzie, the Chief of the Innu Essipit Band Council, Martin Dufour, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Hydro-Québec, Sophie Brochu and the President and Chief Executive Officer of Boralex Inc., Patrick Decostre, are pleased to announce a historic partnership that will enable the large-scale Apuiat wind farm project to become a reality.

This project fits in directly with the government's vision for Québec's economic recovery, by focusing on the energy transition with a view to reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs). In this context, an increasing demand for electricity can be foreseen, on account of the deployment of the Green Economy Plan (PEV) as well as potential projects to export electricity to the United States and other Canadian provinces. The time has come to move forward with this significant project. Also, the new version of the project provides for a 17% reduction in the electricity price, in comparison to that presented in 2018.

The agreement concluded provides for the signing of a 30-year contract to purchase the electricity that will be produced by the Apuiat wind farm. The contract between Hydro-Québec Production and Parc éolien Apuiat S.E.C., a company jointly held by the Innu communities and Boralex, provides for the electricity to be bought at a cost of about 6¢/kWh. Apuiat becomes the wind farm offering the most competitive cost of all wind farms under contract in Québec.

#### **Quotes:**

"After many months of work with our Indigenous partners, I am proud to present a win-win project for the Innu communities, for Québec and for the planet. This is excellent news for the entire wind energy sector, in which costs have come down considerably. This means savings for all Quebecers, and substantial royalties will be paid to the local communities. With the Apuiat wind farm, we are continuing to build a greener Québec, a more prosperous Québec, a prouder Québec!"

*François Legault, Premier of Québec*

"I am very pleased with this announcement – as Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, of course, but also as Minister Responsible for the Côte-Nord Region. With our Green Economy Plan and our hydroelectricity export projects, Apuiat takes on its full significance. This project is complementary to our hydroelectricity production, and provides us with a clean energy source to power our ambitions and to provide significant spinoffs for the local communities."

*Jonatan Julien, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and Minister Responsible for the Côte-Nord Region*

“This announcement brings hope to Québec and to the Innu Nation. The Apuiat project underscores the importance of economic development and highlights a collaboration that is beneficial and profitable for all. This is an ambitious project that is respectful of the environment and of the values of the people of the Côte-Nord Region. This is something of which the region’s Innu communities may be proud.”

*Ian Lafrenière, Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs*

“Apuiat is the result of an Innu idea, a desire to build collective wealth. For the first time, across our nation, we are the master builders of a large project of benefit to the Innu and to Quebecers. This project will help us enter into a dialogue and build interdependence, instead of maintaining dependency. The road toward reconciliation must involve economic inclusion of the First Nations and the creation of opportunities for current and future generations. This also means rebuilding a government-to-government relationship, on a nation-to-nation basis. History is taking place right before our eyes; we are writing it together: the Innu, the people of the Côte-Nord Region and Quebecers.”

*Mike Mckenzie, Chief of the Innu Community of Uashat mak Mani-utenam*

“Apuiat is more than just a wind farm. It involves 30 years of revenues for our communities, and a breeze of fresh air for the economy of the Côte-Nord Region. This is also an opportunity for each of our communities to invest autonomously in its own priorities. The Innu have the potential and the willingness to participate in Québec's economic development, and we have much to offer. Although Apuiat is our first national project, it will certainly not be the last.”

*Martin Dufour, Chief of the Innu Essipit Band Council*

“The Apuiat project will answer the increasing needs for energy to decarbonize our economy and that of neighbouring markets. It also marks an important step in our relations with the Innu communities and reflects our willingness to listen to the ambitions of Québec’s Indigenous people.”

*Sophie Brochu, President and Chief Executive Officer of Hydro-Québec*



“It is an honour for Boralex to accompany our Innu partners in creating their first national project. Owing to technological advances, to the reduced costs and interest rates, and to the extension of the term of the power purchase agreement, we have been able to make Apuiat the project with the most competitive electricity purchase price of all wind farms in Québec. This is the beginning of a new and wonderful chapter: for the Innu, for our industry, for Québec and for Boralex. We at Boralex are proud to be at the forefront at this key moment that will leave its mark on our times and will contribute, in partnership with the government and the Innu communities, to the indispensable energy transition.”

*Patrick Decostre, President and Chief Executive Officer, Boralex Inc.*

**Key facts:**

- The word “Apuiat” in Innu Aimun, means a paddle, a symbol of moving forward together in the same direction.
- The wind farm, of approximately 200 MW, will be built on the traditional territory (Nitassinan) of the Uashat mak Mani-utenam First Nation and on public lands in the City of Port-Cartier in the Côte-Nord Region.
- The Innu communities and Boralex are 50-50 partners in the project. The partners will equally share the profits generated by the sale of electricity throughout the life of the project.
- The community of Uashat mak Mani-utenam and the City of Port-Cartier will each receive annual royalties, throughout the life of the project, as host communities.
- The Apuiat wind farm will lead to the creation of about 300 jobs during construction, and about 10 permanent jobs during operation.
- Construction of the wind farm is set to begin in the summer of 2022, and commissioning of the project is planned for December 2024.
- The project’s partners will resume the public information process in February. Virtual meetings with various interest groups in the region and virtual public information sessions will be organized in the coming weeks.
- The signing of this contract will have no impact on electricity rates for customers of Hydro-Québec.

#### **Related links:**

- For more information on the Apuiat project: <http://www.apuiat.com/fr/>
- For information on the Ministry and to learn more about its activities and achievements, see [mern.gouv.qc.ca](http://mern.gouv.qc.ca) and the social networks:
  -  <https://fr-ca.facebook.com/EnergieRessourcesNaturelles>
  -  [https://twitter.com/mern\\_quebec](https://twitter.com/mern_quebec)

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