

**THE  
JOINT PUBLIC  
REVIEW  
PANEL  
REPORT**

**SABLE  
GAS  
PROJECTS**

**Canadian Environmental  
Assessment Agency**

**Nova Scotia Department  
of Environment**

**National Energy Board**

**Natural Resources Canada**

**Nova Scotia Department  
of Natural Resources**

**Canada-Nova Scotia  
Offshore Petroleum Board**

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Acid Generating Rock  
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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

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## **GLOSSARY**

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tions, and showed that the likelihood of drill cuttings and associated mud reaching the Gully would be very small (0.27 percent of the time). Additionally, the probability of their reaching the Gully at concentrations capable of adversely impacting the Gully's marine life is even smaller.

In response to DFO, the Proponents have proposed the following measures to mitigate any adverse environmental effects: adoption of specialized mud handling equipment; acceptance of a compliance and effects monitoring program, as outlined to the Panel; and adherence to sound and responsible environmental management.

The Proponents have also stated that the fate and effects of drill cutting discharges will be investigated as part of the five year Environmental Effects Monitoring (EEM) programs, and will involve benthic sediment chemistry, benthic community analysis, in-situ monitoring and organalytic testing of sea scallops. If for example, the EEM program showed greater than anticipated impact to the environment, the use of SBMs would be investigated to determine whether they could mitigate those effects. The Environmental Effects Monitoring (EEM) program would continue should other fluids be utilized. In addition, regular compliance monitoring will be conducted on the drilling units to measure discharge volumes, rates and percentages of retained oil. The Proponents also stated that whole oil-base or synthetic drilling mud will not be disposed into the ocean. Water base fluids which will be used in the upper sections of the hole will be disposed overboard along with the associated cuttings. SOEP stated that they will work to develop agreed upon criteria for the possible use of alternative methods for the disposal of drilling cuttings and mud. Furthermore, waste discharges will not be combined into common outflows with the objective of diluting a waste stream to meet specified discharge concentrations.

Some intervenors argued for a zero-discharge policy in accordance with their interpretation of the precautionary principle. Based on the confidence expressed by DFO in the modelling scenarios and the proposed use of low toxicity mineral oils

### Precautionary Principle

Recognition of the gap in scientific information and data has led to the development and increased acceptance of the "precautionary approach" as a decision-making principle in situations involving environmental effects. This principle states that where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage to the environment, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.

The first significant application of the precautionary principle in international environmental law took place in 1987 at the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer. Other global conventions which Canada has signed incorporating this principle include the 1992 Rio Declaration on environment and development and the 1996 United Nations Convention on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks.

The precautionary principle is referred to in the *Nova Scotia Environment Act*, and in the *Oceans Act*. This principle is also one of the guiding principles in the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans revised policy on Underutilized Species (or Emerging Fisheries):

The precautionary approach has also been recommended for inclusion into the revision of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.