

Memorandum of Understanding

**The Innu, Maliseet and Mi'gmaq National coalition for the protection of the Gulf of St. Lawrence**

**WHEREAS** we the Innu, Maliseet and Mi'gmaq, having inhabited the coast of the Gulf of St. Lawrence since time immemorial, possess an inalienable title and aboriginal and treaty rights in and to the land and surrounding waters, which are protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* and which we have never surrendered;

**WHEREAS** the Innu, Maliseet and Mi'gmaq are guardians of our traditional lands, minerals and waters for all future generations in order to protect the rights, obligations and the sacred instructions of our ancestors;

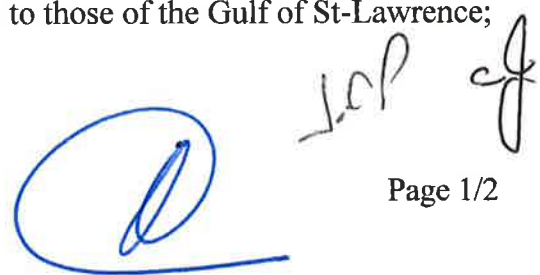
**WHEREAS** it is because of our continued relationship with the lands and waters of our national territories that we have managed to live from the resources that maintain the social, political, spiritual and economic well being of our nations;

**WHEREAS** an environmental disaster in the Gulf of St. Lawrence may have devastating repercussions on the Gulf's fish and the surrounding medicines, plants, food and animals from all elements of creation;

**WHEREAS** our communities depend on the Gulf of St. Lawrence for their socioeconomic development, such as through tourism, and their subsistence activities, such as hunting and fishing;

**WHEREAS** growing population, technological power, consumptive demand, and globalization are putting the Gulf of St. Lawrence under multiple stresses;

**WHEREAS** nature cannot be forced to conform to human borders or economic rules, but instead, we must preserve its well-being and subordinate our interests to those of the Gulf of St-Lawrence;



**WHEREAS** the unique relationship that the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Innu, Maliseet and Mi'gmaq share, efforts must be undertaken to prioritize the protection of the waters and promote the sustainable development of the coastal aboriginal communities of the Gulf of St-Lawrence;

**WHEREAS** each Nation recognizes and respects the independence and sovereignty of the other Nations who are signatories of this Memorandum of Understanding;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Innu, Maliseet and Mi'gmaq form an Aboriginal coalition for the protection of the Gulf of St-Lawrence;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the main objectives of the coalition are the following:

- Speak with a common voice when issues related to the Gulf of St. Lawrence are at stake;
- Protect the Aboriginal and treaty rights and title throughout the Gulf of St. Lawrence;
- Prepare and table with the Government of Canada and the Government of Québec a joint Aboriginal and treaty rights and title claim to the Gulf of St. Lawrence;
- Develop a Innu, Maliseet and Mi'gmaq accord in response to the “Accord between the Government of *Canada and the Government of Québec accord for the shared management of petroleum resources in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.*” (as adopted on March 24, 2011).

Signed this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of October 2013, in Akwesasne,

  
Chef Jean-Charles Piétacho

On behalf of Innu Nation

  
Chief Claude Jeannotte

On behalf of Mi'gmawei  
Mawiomi

  
Grand Chief Anne  
Archambault

On behalf of Maliseet  
Nation