



## PRESS RELEASE

### Threat of intimidation by a gas company: CQDE denounces a gagging attempt

**Montreal, April 9, 2021** - The Centre québécois du droit de l'environnement (Quebec Environmental Law Centre, CQDE) denounces the Alberta-based Pieridae Energy company's attempt through a cease and desist letter to silence the Gaspesian organization, Environnement Vert Plus, and its spokesperson Mr. Pascal Bergeron. CQDE's partner lawyers are responding that their clients refuse to be gagged, and in turn have issued a formal notice to the company to immediately cease any attempts to limit their clients' freedom of expression.

[Pieridae Energy has put](#) the co-signatories of [a March 10 letter on notice](#) concerning public funding the company is seeking from the federal government for its Goldboro project. The amount requested is nearly \$1 billion. The company believes that the letter discloses confidential information: it is threatening legal action and asking the signatories to retract the letter and to reveal their sources.

The CQDE and its partner lawyers denounce the company's threat of legal action and consider that all questions relating to public financing are generally and by definition in the public interest, especially when the public financing is linked to projects that involve high environmental risks. Through its [Ugo Lapointe Fund for Freedom of Expression](#), CQDE supports its partners in their efforts.

"It is essential to protect the freedom of expression and to preserve public debate as a fundamental element of any democratic society. We denounce this obvious and unacceptable attempt to silence concerned citizens and support the sending of a formal notice to Pieridae in response," said Geneviève Paul, Executive Director of CQDE.

"The ability to look after the public interest must not be limited by fear of receiving cease and desist notices or even legal action. This process is unfortunately not isolated and must be systematically denounced", explains Me Marc Bishai. "In putting Pieridae on notice in response to their cease and desist letter, we also recall the principle that matters of public interest are not, and should not be considered confidential" he adds.

"I am grateful to be supported by CQDE through this publicly available fund." says Pascal Bergeron.



"The public and environmental groups must be able to express themselves without fear of reprisal," he continues.

CQDE reaffirms its commitment to defend access to information and whistleblowers: it is in the public interest to ensure attempts to silence concerned citizens do not prevail.

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#### **Additional information about the company Pieridae Energy Limited**

Pieridae Energy is an Alberta-based company that merged with Quebec-based Petrolia in 2017. The company holds over 2,000 km<sup>2</sup> of exploration licenses in Quebec. Its proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal in Goldboro, Nova Scotia, would rely on transporting fossil gas from Alberta via a pipeline into southern Quebec. The terminal would produce ten million metric tons of LNG per year. Canada and Germany have signed an agreement on energy issues that could, according to ministerial statements, lead to the export of LNG to Germany.

Source: [The Quebec Environmental Law Centre \(CQDE\)](#)

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