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For Immediate Release

Premier's lack of action on Muskrat Falls commitments a step back for reconciliation, says President Lampe

Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe is questioning why the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador continues to ignore the recommendations of the Independent Expert Advisory Committee (IEAC) on ways to mitigate human health concerns related to methylmercury throughout the Muskrat Falls reservoir as well as in the Lake Melville ecosystem.

“The Premier and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has done very little to ease concerns over the potential impacts of Muskrat Falls on our health, culture and way of life,” says President Lampe.

On October 26, 2016, following an 11-hour marathon meeting with Labrador’s three Indigenous leaders, the Premier committed to resolving several key issues surrounding the pending flooding of the Muskrat Falls reservoir. All leaders also agreed to establish the IEAC in order to seek an independent, evidence-based approach – utilizing best available science along with Indigenous traditional knowledge – to determine and recommend options for mitigating human health concerns related to methylmercury. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/dwight-ball-comments-meeting-1.3821277>

The IEAC, one month after being formally established, issued its first set of recommendations in September of last year. It issued a second set of recommendations on April 10 of this year.

“We have inquired repeatedly, through emails, telephone calls and correspondence, as to when the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador intends to respond to the recommendations,” notes President Lampe. “All we are getting is lip service, which leads us to believe the Premier’s commitment was an empty one.”

It appears as though the Province is intentionally delaying its response to the recommendations to ensure there is not enough time to implement them before full impoundment, says President Lampe.

“The Premier talks about the importance of reconciliation with the province’s Indigenous peoples, yet he continues to show very little respect to our concerns – despite making commitments to the contrary. His government’s refusal to respond to the IEAC’s recommendations is a step back for reconciliation.”

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