



Atlantic Canada and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon: 20 Years of Regional Co-operation



Atlantic Canada
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Photo Credit: Laurent Delaunay - Aviation civile Saint-Pierre and Miquelon

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France and Canada value the ties that were created long ago. Atlantic Canada and the islands of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon are a concrete symbol of the longstanding friendship between the two countries. Today, these two coastal regions continue to enjoy a flourishing relationship.

The relationship between the two countries was further strengthened by the signing of the France-Canada agreement in 1994, which created the Regional Joint Cooperation Commission between Atlantic Canada and the archipelago of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon. This agreement gave birth to a bilateral mechanism for co-operation that supports the growth of partnerships between Atlantic Canada and the archipelago in areas of mutual interest for their citizens.

The Joint Commission's mandate is to strengthen the existing ties between the two regions and develop a strong relationship that takes into account the mutual and diversified interests of their citizens.

The Joint Commission's importance to both countries was highlighted in June 2013, when its mandate was included in the Canada-France Enhanced Cooperation Agenda unveiled by President François Hollande and Prime Minister Stephen Harper. This Agenda reiterates the key directions of the commission and contributes to strengthening concrete co-operation between the two regions.

Commitment to Sustainable Development

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency is committed to protecting the environment by promoting sustainable businesses and communities in Atlantic Canada.



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Meeting of the administrative committee of the Regional Joint Cooperation Commission, 2014.

Evolution of the Joint Commission

The first meeting of the Joint Commission was held in 1996, two years after the agreement was signed. At that time, Canada appointed the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) as the Canadian co-chair of the commission. ACOA is a federal agency, active in various socio-economic sectors in the Atlantic provinces. Therefore, it has the capacity and the networks required to develop and maintain positive relations between the neighbours. ACOA invites federal departments, provincial governments and community organizations to appoint delegates to the Commission.

The Prefecture of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon co-chairs the commission for France and appoints members to the commission according to its own prescribed manner.

Since its creation, the Joint Commission has held 16 meetings, generally once a year, to approve the selection of major projects and to update members on project outcomes. Diplomatic meetings are held as part of the Joint Commission's work to allow representatives from both countries to address various issues. Since 2008, work on the ground has been

handled by an administrative committee and working subcommittees in the following areas:

- Health and medicine
- Economic relations and trade
- Society, culture and education
- Aquaculture, agriculture and environment
- Public security
- Tourism

The co-chairs of the various subcommittees are chosen for their ability to take the lead on files and to move them forward. These leaders bring an action-based approach to the table, delivering more tangible and visible results for citizens in both countries.

The annual budget for the Joint Commission's projects is shared equally between ACOA and the Prefecture of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.



City of Saint-Pierre (Photo Credit: Jean-Luc Drake)

Major Files

Health and medicine

Health alerts and pandemics: An information sharing system on infectious diseases and epidemics has been implemented and is working well for the authorities of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, Canada and the Atlantic provinces. This ensures improved communication with regard to risks that need to be monitored and actions to be taken in the event of a pandemic.

Telehealth: The two parties are comparing regulations that relate to the responsibilities of health care professionals and the recognition of their credentials. The objective is to achieve greater co-operation in the field of telehealth.



Centre Hospitalier François Dunan - Saint-Pierre and Miquelon (Photo Credit: Jean-Luc Drake)

Economic relations and trade

Economic Information Observatory: The observatory is composed of a research unit in Saint-Pierre and Miquelon and one at the University of Moncton's Shippagan campus in New Brunswick. The observatory watches and analyzes economic activity in both regions and publishes the results in a monthly information bulletin, called *Intell-Écho*. This bulletin has already proven helpful to scouting missions in France.

Promotion: The archipelago's *Chambre d'agriculture, de commerce, d'industrie, de métiers et d'artisanat (CACIMA)* and the French Chamber of Commerce in Canada – Atlantic Network (FCCCAN) are working together to promote the assets of Atlantic Canada and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon to economic players in France. Economic missions were organized to Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, France and Atlantic Canada. A business delegation from the archipelago also participated in the economic activities at the 2014 Congrès mondial acadien.



Planning meeting for the implementation of the Economic Information Observatory in regional cooperation.



Photo Credit: Jean-Christophe L'Espagnol / Max'Images

Tourism

- **Enhancement of a tourist destination:** Saint-Pierre and Miquelon has become a port of call of choice for cruise companies. The *Comité régional du tourisme de Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon* actively contributes to the Atlantic Canada Cruise Association and Cruise Newfoundland and Labrador.
- **Inclusion in Canadian networks:** Tourism promotion in Atlantic Canada increasingly includes the archipelago of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, which participates in various trade shows such as the Atlantic Canada Showcase. In 2014, Saint-Pierre and Miquelon participated in the World Acadian Congress with an exposition kiosk. With support from ACOA, tourism operators in both regions are also working to develop the archipelago's tourist products and experiences. This co-operative approach makes the Atlantic Region as a whole more attractive to tourists.



Pays de la Sagouine, Bouctouche, NB

Society, culture and education

Many educational exchanges, including:

- Students from *Lycée Émile Letournel's* vocational baccalaureate program can complete their final internship in the Atlantic provinces.
- An agreement between *Lycée Émile Letournel* and Newfoundland and Labrador's College of the North Atlantic allows culinary program students from both institutions to benefit from expertise available at each school.
- An agreement authorizes exchanges between teachers from Newfoundland and Labrador's francophone school board and from Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.
- Students from the islands of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon can become acquainted with Acadian identity and culture via visits to Atlantic Canada's francophone communities. There are also bilateral cultural and linguistic exchanges between youth in Newfoundland and Labrador and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.
- Students from the French islands who study at Canadian universities pay the same tuition fees as Canadian students rather than international student rates.

A wealth of cultural sharing:

The Commission aims to increase opportunities for cultural encounters between the communities. Funded projects include community theatre, dance and music exchanges.



Université de Moncton
(Photo Credit: Rachelle Richard Léger)



The production of "Au gré des vents" by Miquelon Culture Patrimoine at the Congrès mondial acadien 2014.



Salmon farming workboat - Fortune Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador

Aquaculture, agriculture and environment

Environmental protection: Canada and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon have formalized co-operation related to various sectors of the environment. Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Environment Canada, in co-operation with Saint-Pierre and Miquelon authorities, are working on files related to marine invasive species as well as at-risk bird species and migratory birds.

Sharing of aquaculture expertise:

In order to grow the aquaculture sector, the Joint Commission organizes and encourages the sharing of best practices. A program of visits to aquaculture operations and the Marine Research Institute at Nova Scotia's Université Sainte-Anne provides operators from the archipelago with the opportunity to share knowledge with experts in Atlantic Canada.



Photo Credit: Cyr Couturier

Animal health status: The file is now with appropriate Canadian and French authorities. A visit by Canadian experts provided an opportunity to gather data on current practices in Saint-Pierre and Miquelon with regard to meat hygiene, animal health and risk analysis.

Public security

Exceptional co-operation in marine matters: The Joint Commission's work on the public security file has strengthened co-operation between Saint-Pierre and Miquelon and Atlantic Canada in the areas of disaster prevention at sea, marine protection, and search and rescue activities. A calendar of search and rescue and marine pollution control exercises has been developed and authorities from both sides are incorporating the other region's activities into these exercises.

Police: Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon's *Gendarmerie nationale*, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Royal Constabulary of Newfoundland are pooling knowledge about the systems they use. These efforts ensure greater effectiveness in the event of joint interventions.



Canadian Coast Guard Vessel



Looking Forward

The Joint Commission is continuing its efforts to ensure long-lasting and beneficial ties between Atlantic Canada and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.

As good neighbours, Canada and France continue to strengthen their relationship by focusing on co-operation and joint efforts as well as the development of future projects.

The Joint Commission's work over the past 20 years has been the result of many participants and stakeholders contributing to the discussion and the revitalization that has occurred in recent years has led to an impressive number of new projects.

To achieve its goals, the Joint Commission relies on the ideas and energy of all those who seek to advance regional co-operation. Citizens from both regions are invited to contact the Commission and share their ideas, concerns and desire to participate in regional co-operation.

For more information

To learn more about the Regional Joint Cooperation Commission between Atlantic Canada and Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, please contact ACOA at 1-800-561-7862 (TTY: 1-877-456-6500) or by email at information@acoa-apeca.gc.ca.