



BACKGROUND

PLAINE (Programme de recherche visant L'Atténuation des Impacts de la Navigation commerciale sur les Écosystèmes) is Réseau Québec maritime's (RQM) Research Program for the Mitigation of Impacts of Commercial Navigation on Ecosystems. It was developed in the context of Avantage Saint-Laurent, the Government of Quebec's new vision for its maritime strategy, which aims to support the sustainable development of Quebec's maritime sector. PLAINE is managed by RQM thanks to \$5 million in funding from the ministère des Transports du Québec (MTQ – Quebec's Department of Transportation) over five years (2021-2026).

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The Program supports initiatives taking place in urban and natural ecosystems on Quebec's maritime territory, particularly in the St. Lawrence system (river, estuary, and gulf), the Saguenay Fjord, and Quebec's coastal areas.

RESEACH SUPPORT

PLAINE supports research projects led by researchers affiliated with universities, colleges, and centres for technology transfer (CCTT) located in Quebec. These projects must adhere to RQM's values; intersectoral collaboration, open innovation and cocreation. The involvement of diverse maritime sector stakeholders (industry, community organizations, indigenous communities, government, etc) will be an essential part of the projects, in order to foster sustainable innovation initiatives through interdisciplinary discussions. Projects supported by PLAINE will have to show tangible outcomes, through concrete and measurable deliverables.

PLAINE aims to support initiatives through two main modules:

MODULE 1: Cataloguing and developing knowledge on stress and impact factors linked to commercial navigation and port activities

Initiatives supported through this module should seek to:

- Compile existing knowledge on one or more types of impact, including cumulative impacts
- Identify existing knowledge gaps and needs
- Acquire new knowledge on the impacts in question

MODULE 2: Developing solutions to reduce impacts of commercial navigation and port activities

Initiatives supported through this module should seek to develop innovative best practices and technological solutions, at varying levels of development, including:

- Initial: fundamental research or proof of concept
- Intermediate: research and development dedicated to validate the efficiency or pertinence of proposals, including prototype production
- Advanced: implementation in a practice environment

CENTRALIZING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Information and knowledge acquisition, transfer, and sharing is an integral part of sustainable development. In order to support its two modules, PLAINE aims to establish initiatives that will contribute to mobilizing and sharing knowledge and strategic data linked to the environmental and social impacts of commercial navigation.

FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSALS

As part of this call, grants are allocated as follows:

- **Module 1:** \$50,000 for 1-year projects
- **Module 2:** \$200,000 for 2-year projects

Call start: December 21, 2021

Deadline: February 17, 2022 at 4:59 PM

Please note that additional funding may be allocated to cover indirect costs of research from universities, if applicable. Moreover, support may include ship time, if necessary, in order to cater to any fieldwork needs that may arise.

L'EMBARQUEMENT: KICK-OFF WORKSHOP

An initial networking and project ideation workshop involving researchers and a variety of marine stakeholders took place on Wednesday 19, 2022. Over 120 people took part with enthusiasm, making the workshop a true springboard for future collaborative projects, leading to promising innovative advances in the marine sector.

A SPACE FOR SPECIALIZED CONSULTATION

Through PLAINE, RQM wishes to mobilize and involve experts and specialists concerned with environmental issues linked with shipping and port activities, particularly in Quebec, but across Canada and internationally as well. Thus, initiatives will be put in place to bring together specialists and encourage exchanges and collaboration.

These may take the form of:

- Annual conferences
- Open innovation workshops
- Communities of practice
- Expert panels.

ABOUT RQM AND ITS VALUES

Following the announcement of Quebec's first marine strategy, the Réseau Québec maritime (or Quebec Maritime Network) was created in 2016 and brings together all of Quebec's universities, colleges, centres for technology transfer, as well as many other research centres, public and community organizations and businesses operating in the marine sector. Bolstered by its dynamic community of members, RQM positioned itself as a reference in terms of intersectoral and collaborative research in Quebec, Canada, as well as at an international scale, thanks to its Institut France-Québec pour la coopération scientifique en appui au secteur Maritime (IFQM). The involvement of all stakeholders in the research process is one of the fundamental values of RQM and contributes to lasting and profound sustainable changes for Quebec society. PLAINE falls within RQM's important mission.

For any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact the PLAINE coordinator:

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