



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

The practical case study of the St. Lawrence central to the international observatory's discussions on Initiatives for the Future of Great Rivers (IFGR) *The Port of Montreal, proud host of this international gathering*

Montreal, April 21, 2016 – Following the second session of Initiatives for the Future of Great Rivers (IFGR), held from April 18 to 20 at the headquarters of the Montreal Port Authority (MPA), Erik Orsenna, economist, writer, member of the Académie Française, expert in sustainable development, the environment, agriculture and emerging economies, and President of this multidisciplinary international observatory created by Compagnie Nationale du Rhône (CNR), presented work summaries that showed the plurality of uses of a river and their necessary acceptability in a controlled risk culture, and in a context where new energy models are emerging around rivers. The study on the Port of Montreal within the St. Lawrence / Great Lakes system was the focal point of the exchanges.

"Through this international gathering of great importance, we are pleased to have been able to help bring a multidisciplinary perspective on the St. Lawrence River, which connects the Port of Montreal to all the continents and more than 140 countries," said Sylvie Vachon, President and CEO of the MPA. "The themes that the MPA proposed to IFGR members were brilliantly dealt with. The expertise and informed view of members will guide us to take better actions to safeguard the sustainability of the river that we depend on so much."

Speaking on behalf of the rivers in the international debate on the fight against climate change and making society aware of the role, the place and the vision of the river of tomorrow

While the river is one of the resources most affected by climate change/levier d'actions, it is also a tremendous lever for action by being a reservoir of fresh water, a source for the production of renewable energy, an environmentally-friendly and cost-effective means of transportation, and a vector in territorial development. For this, it is necessary to get river managers to dialogue among each other, share good practices for sound management of this resource and define the river of tomorrow. This is the role of IFGR, which met for its second session in Montreal.

The practical case study of the St. Lawrence and workshops on risk culture and new energy models

Nine rivers represented, institutional representatives (from Voies Navigables de France representing France's waterways, Hidrovia representing a South American seaway, and the Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal representing development of the Senegal River) and experts (economists, historians, archaeologists, governance experts, virologists, etc.) worked initially on the practical case study of the St. Lawrence focussing on two issues: