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• (1130)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

Good morning, colleagues. I would remind everyone that we are not in camera.

We left off on Thursday in the middle of debating Mr. Deltell's motion on tidal energy. When we broke, we had on the list Mr. Kram, Mr. van Koeverden and Mr. Bachrach. We'll start with Mr. Kram.

Mr. Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I would like to begin by moving an amendment to my colleague's motion. The amendment is as follows:

That the committee express its disappointment with the regulatory environment created by this government that has led—

Here I would like to add:

—Sustainable Marine Energy to withdraw a tidal energy project that would have generated clean electricity from the Bay of Fundy

I would like to cross out the words “tidal power projects pulling out of Canada”, and then the remainder of the motion stays as is.

The reason for this—and I believe my colleague Mr. Perkins spoke about this at length at a previous meeting—is that Sustainable Marine Energy was the particular project that was in the news and had the most potential for generating clean electricity, and it was the subject of, I believe, three years of back-and-forth between this company and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. That one incident really highlighted the trouble with the regulatory environment at DFO and in other government departments.

I believe the amendment is being circulated right now in both official languages. I think focusing on this one particular project, which highlights these problems, would be beneficial to improving the regulatory process. That's my amendment.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kram. Thank you for the clarity of presentation. It helps us all.

I believe the motion with the amendment that Mr. Kram is putting forward is being circulated at the moment. Now we will go to debating the amendment. That means I will have to divert from the speakers list, which I will come back to.

We have Mr. Mazier and Mr. Perkins. Would anyone else like to speak to the amendment? I don't see anyone else, but who knows?

We'll start with Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

To continue on with my colleague's amendment here, Sustainable Marine Energy was the project in question. I'm going to read from a CBC news article, entitled “Tidal power developer slams DFO for years of delays, stops application for N.S. project”, from March 21, 2023:

The CEO of Sustainable Marine Energy, a company based in Scotland with an office in Dartmouth, says his company is stepping back from its application for a site with the non-profit Fundy Ocean Research Centre for Energy (FORCE) near Parrsboro, N.S.

“We have notified [the Department of Fisheries and Oceans] that we are withdrawing, what is now our third application, for an authorization,” said Jason Hayman. “We have been working for about three years to get an authorization from DFO to deliver our project, but we are basically coming up against a brick wall.”

So the expansion plans are halted. The article continues:

“Right now we are trying to work with our project partners and stakeholders and look at our options,” said Hayman. “We would like to remain in Nova Scotia if we can find projects to deliver, but that's proving to be quite difficult at the moment.”

The article goes on to say, and of course this is what the amendment and the motion are all about, that when it comes to the atmosphere that this government has created, this is another blow to the tidal power industry:

Hayman says his company has sunk about \$30 million into their work to use tidal power to generate electricity from the Bay of Fundy and have also been granted millions of dollars in federal government funding.

Sustainable Marine's decision is a blow to the tidal power industry, said FORCE executive director Lindsay Bennett.

“We are very aware of the need to build a clear regulatory path for marine renewables,” said Bennett.

“Every project has unique challenges, but right now Canada is missing a clear regulatory process. If we're going to fight climate change with marine renewables, we need one.”

This just goes on. We've been saying on our side for a very long time that this is the problem when governments get too big, get too authoritative and get too much of that top-down type of approach. The industry is basically begging for a clear path and some clear vision on how we are going to continue on with renewable power in our country. They need a clear framework.

I really do think this is why the motion is so important and this committee must send a clear signal back to the government that it had better get its act together.

Thank you.

• (1135)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Mazier.

Yes, Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I'm wondering if, for the benefit of those of us on Zoom, we could have an email version of the amendment being debated.

The Chair: I believe it's on the cusp of being distributed. It's in the mail, as they say. It's in the email. It's coming. It's in the pipeline, as they say.

Go ahead, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Thank you. I'm glad it's in the mail and not in the wind.

Thank you, Mr. Kram, for the refinement to the motion on the specific project.

With regard to why it's important, over the last few decades numerous companies have been involved. That includes a large one where Nova Scotia Power had a partnership for various technologies to try to find a way to harness the power of the Bay of Fundy. In particular, I think Nova Scotia Power had invested over \$100 million in trying to get theirs.... Generally, as I said at the last meeting, these are large turbines. Just to give you some scale, some of them are almost five storeys high and sunk into the bottom of the Bay of Fundy.

The bay, of course, has the highest tides in the world: 160 billion tonnes of seawater go in and out of that bay every day. That's why it's such a powerful force. The difference with this company is that they did not place their turbines on the bottom. It was a different ship with turbines attached that was at the surface of the water. It was able to produce a significant amount of power and actually survive the power of the Bay of Fundy, which the other projects were not. Some of them got destroyed in as little as 48 hours, whereas this one continued to operate. It continued to generate electricity that was connected by a cable into Nova Scotia Power. Because it was energy generated by the private sector, Nova Scotia Power was paying the company for the power it had generated, for its capital investment.

Now, it had had four approvals so far, up to that date, from DFO to continue this project and make it happen. An enormous amount of research had been provided to DFO over the three years of this, on the plan and the precautions and the impact on the fishery, which of course we all care about. The Bay of Fundy is an impor-

tant fishery area, primarily at the sea floor, for crustaceans. Lobster, as we know, is the most profitable element of what is fished in the Bay of Fundy. There are some open-net pen farms on the Bay of Fundy as well, but the primary seafood that is harvested commercially in the Bay of Fundy is lobster on both the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia sides.

Obviously, something floating on the top isn't impacting the primary food source and the primary commercial fishery on the bottom. That was a problem for those other ones that were being sunk, but this one was not. It was confusing for the company that had managed to have such success. After the Department of Fisheries and Oceans had issued four permits, it decided not to issue a fifth permit to take it to the next level of operation. The company has said that a large amount of data and a large amount of information had been provided to DFO, and when DFO refused to issue the next permit, they were unwilling to explain why. They were unwilling to share what it was they were looking for in the impact on the ocean and the fishery that hadn't been provided in many scientific studies in the three years before and the one leading up to the permit that allowed this to happen.

In fact, it was so upsetting and baffling that the Premier of Nova Scotia, who generally doesn't intervene on fisheries issues since fisheries issues are a federal responsibility, said in an interview with CTV that he wanted to highlight what he saw as the hypocrisy. That's why I think this motion has to express the failure of the government to move forward on this project specifically, in contrast to the previous, broader motion, which talked about all tidal projects. There are other tidal projects with turbines being sunk at the bottom that are still being tried. The only successful one dealt with this project, which is why there is this refinement to the motion.

• (1140)

The premier was quoted as follows:

"We just need the federal government to wake up on this, it's really ridiculous what's happened here," he says.

"If their ultimate objective is really and sincerely to protect the planet and green the grid, then it's not through a carbon tax, it's actually through generating green energy through tidal, through wind, through solar, all these mechanisms," Houston adds.

Meanwhile, the leader of the opposition, who's a Liberal, also criticized the decision to not proceed with this green project.

While, on the one hand, we have a bill that's actually being debated in Parliament tomorrow, called Bill C-49, which gives some existing federal agencies the ability to determine where wind power and offshore energy power go, it's amending the Atlantic accord, which sets out the terms of the Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board's mandate in that, and Newfoundland and Labrador's as well, and gives them not only a revised new process but also the additional responsibility to now approve ocean energy projects.

After the blowback from the company and from Nova Scotians and from the premier, the response of this government and the then fisheries minister, Minister Murray, was that we should convene a committee. That seems to be a habit of the Liberals. When faced with a problem, they say, "Let's convene a committee. Let's not actually look at understanding why DFO and the minister herself refused the permit. Let's have a committee look at this and find out what happened."

Well, it's pretty obvious what happened. DFO was inconsistent in issuing its fifth permit to make sure that clean energy goes through. Why do we need a committee of DFO officials to figure out why DFO officials said no? Why don't the DFO officials just tell everybody why they said no rather than convening another committee to have an internal discussion to figure out how they messed this up?

Maybe it's one department that's not talking to the other. Maybe the fisheries minister wasn't talking to the environment minister. They wanted to see green projects and the DFO didn't. It doesn't seem like the government can get its act straight. That's why we need to express the disappointment of this committee about this specific project by Sustainable Marine Energy.

In that same article from CTV, just to make sure we're citing the sources, besides the premier saying, "Shame on the federal government," the company itself said, "We have given them so much information about our system's lack of effects on marine life...as well as (pointing) them in the direction of other experts who could maybe help." However, DFO didn't turn to any of those other experts before saying no.

What was the effect of all this? The effect of all this was that the only functioning tidal power private sector finance technology—not taxes—solution to generating green energy in Nova Scotia was shut down by DFO. The company itself had to remove the equipment from the ocean. It had to disassemble it all. It's proprietary technology that is ultimately owned by the Scottish company that did it. It then took the Canadian subsidiary, and guess what happened? I know you're anxious to know what happened to that company. That company declared bankruptcy as a result of the intervention of DFO. We lost an amazing technology that was not financed by taxpayers but financed by private sector capital to generate new technology and new ways to produce green energy from our oceans.

Remember, DFO is the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, yet they decided that, apparently, generating green energy out of the ocean was not something they wanted to see happen. I'm not sure what else besides the commercial fishery they want to see happen. It's just incredible—it's still mind-boggling to this day—that on the one hand the government would be saying in Bill C-49 that we need to utilize green energy projects in the ocean, and then

provocative statements are being made by Atlantic Liberal colleagues, who I guess forgot that they were part of turning down a green energy project that was functioning—

• (1145)

The Chair: Mr. Perkins, I would just remind you that we're speaking to the amendment.

Mr. Rick Perkins: That's right, and I'm speaking to the part that's dealing with the Sustainable Marine Energy project itself, which was turned down by the Government of Canada.

The Chair: No, it sounds like you're speaking to the larger motion.

Anyway, continue if you must. Otherwise, Mr. Deltell is also on the list.

Mr. Rick Perkins: I appreciate that, Mr. Chair.

The issue, I think, is that as a responsible environment committee, this committee would be concerned with the fact that a functioning project, a working project, the first ever by Sustainable Marine Energy in the tidal power space in the Bay of Fundy, was stopped by the Government of Canada, and would express specifically about that project, not just general projects, which is another issue but an important one, its disappointment in the government's not approving the first technology breakthrough in this space in tidal power.

With that, Mr. Chair, I will conclude my remarks for now. I hope our colleagues around the table will recognize the error of the government's ways on this particular project and support our motion and the amendment to the motion.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Deltell, you have the floor.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I support the amendment proposed by my colleague Mr. Kram, as he has succinctly expressed the problem we're all facing. As my colleague Mr. Perkins, who lives where the stakes are highest, so aptly explained, it demonstrates quite clearly that the government has regrettably halted an extraordinarily positive drive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Worse still, it's a Canadian project that has unfortunately been nipped in the bud by the government's attitude.

I'd like to reiterate that we're all united in the desire to reduce pollution and face up to the real dangers and problems generated by climate change, which we all recognize. That's why we need to adopt approaches that are far more pragmatic than ideological, and solutions that deliver real results, rather than ideological debates and radical rhetoric. Instead, we need concrete measures that deliver real results.

That is precisely what the leader of the official opposition expressed in his landmark speech in Quebec City on September 8. Indeed, he made it clear that we need to make real, strong changes and adopt a much more positive approach to countering the effects of climate change. These measures must be based on three flagship elements, which guide us in our actions, as articulated in the Quebec City speech on September 8.

First, we need to invest in new technologies. That's exactly what this project is about: tidal energy. Let me explain. About ten years ago, in Quebec, we wanted to set up a project to create energy from the tides. But the project didn't work, because Quebec's tides aren't powerful enough. We tried, but it didn't work. It did, however, advance science and technology. It led to the results we've seen in Nova Scotia. So we need to invest in new technologies. That's exactly what we're talking about here.

The second pillar of action mentioned in the Quebec City speech is that we need to give green energy the green light. That's essential. We need more and more energy sources based on a clean environment. We all agree on that. Last week, I had the opportunity to explain at length the history of the Quebec advantage in hydroelectricity. In the 1950s, well-informed people and governments enabled the extraordinary deployment of Quebec's hydroelectric potential. I won't go back over what I've already said about the Bersimis, Rivière aux Outardes and Manicouagan power plants. In any case, the historical reality is that Quebec today has exceptional hydroelectric power and should be a source of inspiration to us all. As Mr. Perkins so eloquently explained earlier, Sustainable Marine Energy's technology would enable us to produce green energy that would benefit everyone. So we need to give green energy the green light, not the red light as the government has sadly done.

The third pillar expressed by the leader of the official opposition during his notable speech in Quebec City on September 8 is that we should be proud of Canadian know-how. We need to export it, but first we need to apply it to our natural resources, among other things. Natural resources are obviously part of the concept, and have a direct bearing on tidal power. As I said earlier, Quebec tried these technologies ten or fifteen years ago, but they didn't work, because we don't have the necessary potential. Perhaps we'll find places where we can really exploit the full potential of tidal energy. The Bay of Fundy, as Mr. Perkins, a local citizen, so eloquently explained, has the most powerful tides in Canada. They attract worldwide attention. Technologies that were tried but didn't work were refined. It got to the point where the new technology applied in this project made it profitable. The project was profitable in its own right, without the need for a tax. That's the unfortunate thing about this situation. This project was always going in circles, stymied and red-taped, instead of being acted upon in a concrete, realistic and responsible way, with a view to taking action, completing the project and achieving tangible results. Regrettably, we failed.

• (1150)

I'd like to reiterate that, in our view, climate change is real, and we need to implement concrete measures to tackle the real problems it creates. This includes innovation and new technologies. We also need to give green energy the green light. What's more, Canada has all the resources it needs to fully exploit its energy potential. If we don't, other countries will, and they won't all have the same ethical and environmental standards as we Canadians do.

It's a shame that such a wonderful project has been shelved due to the government's unwillingness to make it happen.

The Chair: Thank you.

No one else seems to wish to speak to the amendment, so we'll move to the vote.

(Amendment negatived: nays 7; yeas 4.)

[*English*]

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): I have a new motion I'd like to read.

The Chair: Is it an amendment to this motion?

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: No. It's a new motion.

The Chair: We have to finish this motion, and then we'll go back to the other motion.

[*Translation*]

The amendment was rejected, so we will now come back to the original version of the motion.

• (1155)

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Mazier: I guess we'll go back to the speakers list. Is that right?

The Chair: Yes.

Do you still want me to read the motion?

Mr. Dan Mazier: You might as well, so that we're all on the same page.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Very well. I'll read it out:

That the committee express its disappointment with the regulatory environment created by this government that has led to tidal power projects pulling out of Canada and acknowledges that one of the primary factors contributing to the departure of these capital investments has been recent changes that have created an intricate regulatory landscape.

I just learned a new word: "*marémotrice*".

Resuming debate on the motion.

Mr. van Koeverden, you have the floor.

[English]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Lib.): I withdraw.

The Chair: Okay.

Go ahead, Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I put myself on the speakers list quite a while back, with the expectation that I would have something to say. I'll just offer a few reflections on where we are.

First of all, I share many of the views that Mr. Perkins has expressed, particularly around the need for renewable energy generation and the need for a regulatory environment that supports renewable energy generation. Although I'm not familiar with the specifics of this particular project that he's highlighted or the regulatory process that led up to the withdrawal of the project, I would, in general, share his disappointment that we see an investment that seemed quite promising leaving the province of Nova Scotia and taking the potential of renewable energy with it.

The challenge that I have is not knowing on what basis DFO revoked or chose not to grant the permit. It makes it difficult to express in such strong terms that the government's regulatory environment was to blame.

There may be other routes for the committee to take that would allow us to gain more insights into what DFO's concerns were. If there was an initiative from the committee to look further into this, that would be something I could support.

As it is, I don't have enough information about the specifics of the regulatory decision to express such strong disappointment as this motion does.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bachrach.

I have Mr. Longfield and then Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Thanks, Chair.

Thanks to Mr. Bachrach. I think there's a way of doing this whereby we can reach the objective of having the discussion on tidal power projects but do it in a more formal way. Therefore, I have an amendment, and maybe I could ask the clerk if she could circulate it in both official languages. That would be that we have three meetings to look into this and invite some people to discuss where the roadblocks are and how we can move forward on behalf of these types of projects. It is disappointing for sure that we haven't landed where we need to land, and maybe this committee can help us to get to that place.

My amendment would read: "That the committee"—and strike out "express our disappointment with the government which has led to"—"undertake a three-meeting study on tidal power projects"—strike out "pulling out of"—"in Atlantic Canada pursuant to Standing Order 108(2)"—strike out "acknowledges that one of"—"that the committee examine the primary factors"—strike out "contributing to the departure of"—"in decisions relating to these capital investments", and strike out "has been recent changes

that have created an intricate". We could say: "primary factors, including the regulatory landscape". Then it's "that the committee invite relevant federal officials, tidal power industry representatives, fisheries representatives, indigenous representatives and provincial government representatives; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the government table a comprehensive response to the report."

That way, we would do more than just throw blame around. We actually would get to the root of the discussion of how we can improve the regulatory landscape. How can we make sure that the industry lands in the right place to get projects like these built?

• (1200)

The Chair: That was a mouthful, so we're going to try to get something in writing and distribute it to everybody. I'm going to break for a few minutes.

• (1200)

(Pause)

• (1210)

[Translation]

The Chair: The meeting is resumed.

Colleagues, you should have before you the wording of the motion with the changes proposed by Mr. Longfield, which should be highlighted in yellow. I'll read it to you anyway:

That the committee undertake a three-meeting study on tidal power projects in Atlantic Canada, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2); that the committee examine the primary factors in decisions relating to these capital investments, including the regulatory landscape; that the committee invite relevant federal officials, tidal power industry representatives, fisheries representatives, Indigenous representatives and provincial government representatives, and that pursuant to Standing Order 109, that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

So that is the motion that would be voted on by the committee should Mr. Longfield's amendment be adopted.

Mr. Perkins, you have the floor.

[English]

Mr. Rick Perkins: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Longfield, for the motion.

I think we're supportive of the motion if I can propose a friendly amendment, which I think we've sent to the clerk. After discussions with Mr. Longfield, we think it fits perhaps best about halfway down, where it says "including the regulatory landscape". I think that after that is where it would say—it probably doesn't need to say "including" again—"but not limited to the shutdown of the Sustainable Marine Energy project".

• (1215)

[Translation]

The Chair: I just want to make sure that everyone understands what Mr. Perkins is proposing.

After “including the regulatory landscape”, we would add “but not limited to, the shutdown of the Sustainable Energy project”, is that right?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes.

The Chair: Very well.

So, we are turning...

[English]

Mr. Rick Perkins: It should say “Marine”. It doesn't say “Marine”.

The Chair: Marine: “Sustainable Marine Energy”.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes: “Sustainable Marine Energy”.

[Translation]

The Chair: Very well.

So, it is moved by Mr. Perkins...

[English]

Mr. Rick Perkins: It should also say “including” or “not limited to”, whichever way you'd like to go.

The Chair: “Including” or “not limited to”...

[Translation]

So it would read “including but not limited to, the shutdown of the Sustainable Marine Energy project”.

We are now debating this subamendment, in other words, the proposed change to Mr. Longfield's amendment.

Does anyone wish to speak or may we proceed to a vote?

Mr. van Koeverden, you have the floor.

[English]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: My concern with an amendment like that and the original motion is that this kind of presumes to know why, and we don't know exactly why. We would like to know exactly why. We all would like to see more renewable energy projects, but I don't think that a proper motion should presume that it's due to some factor, any one factor, before we actually investigate.

We can listen to one group or another group, but it shouldn't be in the motion, because the motion should be accepted by all members. We should work on it together, and we should identify the reasons for it.

I want to look into this. I'm eager to know more, but I don't think the preface of a motion should include a conclusion.

The Chair: Okay. Basically we're speaking now to this amendment, which reads “including, but not limited to, the shutdown of the Sustainable Marine Energy project”, and you spoke against that subamendment.

We'll go to Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Mr. Chair, I think I'll just bring everybody back to when I opened up the meeting here. I read it right from the CBC article: This is the reason they backed out. I can reread it into

the record if you want, but it is very particular. We need that language in there, because we want to find out why they backed out.

They had by far the most experience in this field. I think it would be very good for all of us as parliamentarians to really understand why this project.... There were millions and millions of dollars put into it by private industry, and now they're gone. I think it would be of the utmost importance that we name them in this amendment. I would support this, and I ask the other members of the committee to please support this.

The Chair: I have Mr. Perkins and then Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Rick Perkins: I appreciate what Mr. van Koeverden said. I don't think this calls for any conclusion about why the project was cancelled. It is a fact that the project was cancelled.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: That's actually not accurate.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Well, it is. DFO wouldn't renew the permit, so the project was disassembled. The project is over. That particular project is over.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: It was withdrawn.

Mr. Rick Perkins: There was no way to continue to keep it in the ocean without a DFO permit. I mean, that's a fact—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Without the monitoring they demanded—

Mr. Rick Perkins: Well, that's drawing a conclusion.

The Chair: First of all, we're not having a back-and-forth here.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes, I'm sorry. This motion doesn't say why it was rejected. It just says that it was rejected. That's a fact. Part of the discovery goes to the issue as to why DFO rejected issuing the secondary permit that was required to keep the project going. It's a fact that DFO wouldn't issue the permit.

The Chair: I have Mr. Longfield, Mr. van Koeverden, Mr. Deltell and Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I think the way the motion is written and then amended is opening up the discussion to see what the situation is and how we might improve in the future. I don't think there's a conclusion there, other than that we don't have a project, which is a fact.

Having a discussion in the environment committee is a good place to have it. It does relate to Fisheries and Oceans, which might also have looked at this. It could also be for Natural Resources Canada, but because we are trying to make alternate energy projects in Canada successful, I think it's a good thing for our committee to look at the reasons a project isn't successful. It might be a legitimate reason, but I think we would know that once we've had a study to see whether there's anything we could be doing better or differently.

We might come to the conclusion that, no, everything was done properly and the reasons this project was cancelled follow a proper course of governance, but I think it's very good for us to look at it as a committee. It's three meetings and it does take away from other time, but I think that because it is in the media and because people are discussing it, it would be good for us to get some facts on the table.

• (1220)

The Chair: Before we continue, the interpreters have asked me to mention that the members should not play with their earpiece close to the mike. I'm not quite sure what that means, but—

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Do you want an example?

[*Translation*]

The Chair: This is a request from the interpreters.

I now give the floor to Mr. van Koeverden.

[*English*]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's not my intention to belabour this issue at all. I'm new to this committee, and I'm new to this issue. When I looked it up and read a bit about it, it was apparent to me that the project was withdrawn. There were a lot of factors involved, but suggesting that it was cancelled by DFO is not telling the whole story. I would just like that to be on the record.

Like everybody else who is new on this committee, I'm catching up and learning about the issue and the project, but I don't think it's accurate to state that this project was cancelled by DFO.

Mr. Rick Perkins: It doesn't say that. It doesn't say DFO.

The Chair: We'll go to Mr. Deltell.

Mr. Rick Perkins: It doesn't say DFO.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

What's coming up is very interesting. We're going to look at something that's not too well known in the world of the environment and energy creation. You said yourself, Mr. Chair, that you'd learned a new word today. All the better, we are constantly learning. That said, tidal power has been around since the dawn of time. Where there are tides, there is the creation of motion, and therefore a source of potential energy.

As I reminded you, in Quebec, about ten or fifteen years ago, a project was launched on the St. Lawrence River in the Trois-Rivières region, if memory serves, but it didn't yield conclusive results. However, as Mr. Perkins so aptly put it, the most powerful tides in Canada, if not the world, are in his neck of the woods, in the Bay of Fundy. This has true potential as a new source of energy, and God knows the people of Nova Scotia need it. Unfortunately, they are constrained by their geographic location and lack access to large rivers where hydroelectric dams can be built. As a result, they are forced to rely on fossil fuels such as coal, to a certain extent. They have to work to find new sources of clean energy. That's great, because they have one: tidal power. Unfortunately, the project with the greatest future and hope has been abandoned.

Who's responsible? I'll just read you a CBC article from March 21, quoting the head of Sustainable Marine Energy. Mr. Mazier already read it very well earlier, but unfortunately it bears repeating. Here's the passage in question:

[*English*]

The CEO...says his company is stepping back from its application for a site with the non-profit Fundy Ocean Research Centre for Energy...near Parrsboro, N.S.

[*Translation*]

The following statement is the most revealing as to why the company ended its project:

[*English*]

"We have notified [the Department of Fisheries and Oceans] that we are withdrawing, what is now our third application, for an authorization," said Jason Hayman. "We have been working for about three years to get an authorization from DFO to deliver our project, but we are basically coming up against a brick wall."

[*Translation*]

So whomever was behind the project said that, for three years, he'd been trying as hard as he could to make it work, but he'd run up against a brick wall. As a result, the project went belly-up, even though it had exceptional potential.

This committee has a duty and a responsibility to find out what happened. I don't think I'm going overboard in mentioning this project directly, because, historically speaking, it's the most forward-looking project we've had in Canada. However, the initiator of the project ran into a brick wall for three years. This is not the way to develop new green technologies. On the contrary, now more than ever, we need to speed up the process and give the green light to green energy projects. This is a great project with extraordinary potential for the people of Nova Scotia. Let's move forward, try to understand why it didn't work and make sure we don't repeat the same mistakes.

• (1225)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bachrach, you have the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm highly motivated to bring this to a head, and it seems like there's broad agreement from the committee to hold hearings and study this in greater depth. Really, where we disagree is on any language that presupposes what the reasons were for the termination of the project.

I think the goal is to have the hearings. The goal is not to have a motion that can somehow be used as a political tool. The goal is to get the information so that the committee can arrive at some conclusions about what the circumstances were that led to the loss of this investment, and how we move forward together to promote and ensure that we have renewable energy investment in Canada.

I think we're very close. With the subamendment that's been offered, the aim of it—if I understand it—is to refer specifically to the project. It's not to make it about tidal power in general, but to zero in on and at least include in the scope the circumstances surrounding this specific project.

I think the word that perhaps triggered Mr. van Koeverden's concerns is the word “shutdown”. Of course, the project can be shut down by the proponent or it can be shut down by the regulator. In this case, we don't know much about those circumstances, so I would offer that if we removed the word “shutdown” and simply had the name of the project—so that it said, “including, but not limited to, the Sustainable Marine Energy project”—we could probably all get together around that wording, draw this debate to a close and move on to having some hearings.

I'll offer that. I don't know whether offering it formally as a subamendment is going to raise the hackles of committee members, but I'll offer the observation that if we got rid of the word “shutdown”, I think we would be there.

The Chair: Let me look around the room to see if there's an appetite for an amendment by Mr. Bachrach, if he's willing to just remove the words “the shutdown of the” so that it reads properly.

Mr. Bachrach, could you propose that? I don't think we even need to go to a vote if you propose it.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Chair, I would be happy to propose that we remove the word “shutdown” so that it would read, “including, but not limited to, the Sustainable Marine Energy project”.

The Chair: We actually have to remove the comma and remove “shutdown of the” so that it reads properly, but I think everyone gets that.

Are we good, everyone?

Ms. Pauzé, go ahead.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): No, now that an amendment has been proposed, I no longer need to comment.

The Chair: Very well.

[English]

Mr. Kram, go ahead.

Mr. Michael Kram: I'm okay.

The Chair: We will go back to Mr. Longfield's amendment.

Would anyone like to speak to Mr. Longfield's amendment as amended, where we are adding “including, but not limited to, the Sustainable Marine Energy project”?

[Translation]

Ms. Pauzé, you have the floor.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I think Mr. Longfield's amendment is good and I will be voting in favour of it.

I do wonder about one thing. I feel we are heading off in all directions. Three meetings would be scheduled for this, in addition to those already scheduled to discuss what happened in Alberta and the motion dealing with water. I'm having a bit of trouble figuring all this out, time-wise. In my opinion, the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure could help us establish the schedule. If, every time a motion is tabled, we discuss how many meetings to devote to it, we tend to lose track of what we need to do.

• (1230)

The Chair: Indeed, the subcommittee should set the specific schedule.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes.

The Chair: Does anyone else wish to speak to Mr. Longfield's amendment, which includes the friendly amendment that was proposed?

Seeing no one, we will proceed to the vote.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

[English]

The Chair: This should be the final vote, unless someone proposes an amendment. Can we now vote on the motion as amended by the amendments of Mr. Longfield and many others?

It reads as follows:

That the committee undertake a three-meeting study on tidal power projects in Atlantic Canada pursuant to Standing Order 108(2); that the committee examine the primary factors in decisions related to these capital investments, including the regulatory landscape; that the committee invite relevant federal officials, tidal power industry representatives, fisheries representatives, indigenous representatives, and provincial government representatives and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

After “including the regulatory landscape—”

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: It's “and including”.

The Chair: It should be “and including, but not limited to, the Sustainable Marine Energy project”.

That's how it reads.

Can we have a vote?

(Motion agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: Thank you, colleagues.

Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: We're not in camera.

The Chair: We're not in camera.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Okay. I would like to get us to the end of the clean tech study sometime very soon. We are on version two. I know we have some new members around the table. I don't want to take too much committee time, because I would like to get to that, so maybe we can go back in camera to finish that.

I have circulated a motion for us to do travel to the Kearl project as well as to Fort Chipewyan, so that we can instruct the clerk to get a cost in front of us that we can propose before the November 10 deadline. I've circulated that motion through the clerk, and I wonder if we could have that motion on the floor and hopefully get to a vote on that soon.

The Chair: Would you like to read the motion?

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I'm looking for it.

The Chair: I have it. I can read it for you if you'd like.

That the committee book travel to Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan to witness the environmental damage caused by the Kearl tailings pond leak. That the committee and its analysts use the evidence gathered on this expedition to be part of the study on fresh water and any future study on the tailings ponds leaks. I move that the clerk of the committee be empowered to draft a travel budget and present it to committee, and that the committee review this travel budget no later than October 18.

Does anyone have any comments?

• (1235)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Is that October 18, rather than November?

The Chair: October 18 is a Wednesday. We could adopt the budget next week, and then send it to the Liaison Committee. The motion calls for us to approve the budget by October 18, so we could do that on Tuesday, October 17.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: We are talking about October, aren't we?

The Chair: Yes. I would point out that the deadline for submitting this to the Liaison Committee is November 10.

So, shall the motion carry?

(Motion is carried.)

The Chair: Mr. Longfield, the adoption of your motion will help us greatly in our endeavours.

Normally, we would now continue our study of the draft report in camera. However, I have a technical point to make: it will be 10 to 15 minutes before we can go in camera, and it's already 12:40. Could we adjourn instead, and resume our discussion of the report on our clean energy study in camera on Thursday?

Everyone seems to agree. The meeting is therefore adjourned.

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