

Public outreach and acceptance associated with a potential CCS pilot project test site in the Province of Québec

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Abstract

As CCS is currently not widely known, public outreach and acceptance associated with CCS is a key factor for the implementation of CCS. The general public will need to be fully informed for being supportive of CCS. To gain public acceptance, different actions can be put in place to survey, inform and discuss with the general public, in particular with neighbors of future CO₂ geological storage sites. A review of the actions carried out by the Research Chair on CO₂ geological storage in the Province of Québec to communicate and consult the general public will be presented.

First, a bilingual website was created to inform on Chair's research activities, publications, and events. This website is the first comprehensive French-language source of information about CCS in Canada. It contains, in particular, public outreach (including descriptions of each step in the CCS process), a glossary of CCS terminology and a quiz to allow the public to test its CCS knowledge.

Second, an internet-based survey of Québec residents, conducted in April 2010, has investigated Québécois' opinions about climate change, and their awareness and opinions on CCS. The Québécois of all age recognize the problem of climate change and the importance of action to fight this phenomenon. However, only 14% of them have heard of CCS. After learning about CCS, 62% of the respondents were supportive of the use of CCS, and 55% would support a pilot project in their region.

Third, after conducting several meetings with the representatives of a potential pilot project test site host community, the Chair developed a CCS information and consultation plan. This document was prepared to ensure that local stakeholders and the general public will support the project.

Finally, the next steps planned to reach public acceptance will be the implementation and improvement of the plan above-mentioned. It will consist of meetings with the local representatives, industries and eventually with the general public. As it will be explained, there is a lot of community resistance to shale gas exploration activities in the region considered. Thus, the Chair will have to be very careful when communicating to the public.