



**Groupe  
Desgagnés inc.**



**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Groupe Desgagnés and the ROMM:  
a winning partnership for the better knowledge of our whales**

**Quebec May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015** - Already renowned for many voluntary environmental initiatives, Groupe Desgagnés raises the bar even higher by engaging in a data collection program on cetaceans led by the "Réseau d'observation de mammifères marins" (ROMM).

In 2015, crew members of 18 of the 20 vessels of Desgagnés' fleet will collect data on whales they will encounter in Quebec, eastern and northern Canada's salt waters. They will enrich the database collected since 1998 by the twenty ROMM observers. In 2014, this non-profit organization dedicated to the St. Lawrence marine mammals' conservation started publicly releasing all data on the St. Lawrence Global Observatory website [www.slgo.ca](http://www.slgo.ca).

For Desgagnés, this is an excellent opportunity to raise the environmental awareness of its crew members. "Jean-Charles Leblanc, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mate onboard the M/V Bella Desgagnés is involved with the ROMM since 1998 to gather data while traveling the Lower North Shore. This year we proudly decided to involve our entire Canadian fleet in this project in order to increase knowledge of whales locations often inaccessible to research programs", affirms Mr. Daniel Côté, Desgagnés' Environmental Advisor.

For ROMM, this is an exceptional opportunity to work hand in hand with the marine industry for the marine mammal's conservation. "The more whale sightings data on key commercial waterways will be abundant, the more it will be possible to develop protective measures well adapted to reality, particularly by better understanding the collision risk factors", says Véronique Nolet, ROMM's Assistant Manager.

ROMM began training crew members to increase their ability in identifying many cetacean species encountered. *A Mariner's Guide to Whales in the Northwest Atlantic* is a much appreciated tool that was produced in close collaboration with the Shipping Federation of Canada. Distributed free of charge since 2014, it aims to raise awareness of whales presence and the way to behave around them, notably to reduce collision risk.

**Groupe Desgagnés inc.**

Groupe Desgagnés Inc., whose headquarters are in Quebec City, is a conglomerate that has specialized since the 19th century in marine transportation of liquid bulk, general cargo, dry bulk and passengers. Its activities also extend to ship repair as well as the rental and operation of heavy machinery. The company owns and operates a fleet of ships that navigate on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, the Canadian Arctic, the East coasts of Canada and the United States and all the seas of the world. With an annual turnover nearing 230 million dollars, Desgagnés creates approximately 1,000 jobs in high season with a payroll exceeding 50 million dollars.



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### **Réseau d'observation de mammifères marins (ROMM)**

The "Réseau d'observation de mammifères marins" (ROMM) is a non-profit organization based in Rivière-du-Loup, which is dedicated since 1998 to the conservation and enhancement of the St. Lawrence and its wildlife. ROMM works with integrated management and collaborates with various actors of the shipping industry in order to engage in a concerted effort to conserve the marine ecosystems.

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### **Sources :**

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