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Petitcodiac: Sentinels want to force the hand of Ottawa

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MONCTON - The Riverkeeper organization maintains its request for judicial review, which was filed in July as a result of the inaction of the province in the Petitcodiac River.

Specifically, this application was filed to the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans take steps to force the province to address the situation of the river. When the province announced its plan to restore the river, Michel Desjardins, president of Riverkeeper, said the agency would take a few weeks to judge whether such proceedings were still needed.

The province has chosen to replace the causeway on the Petitcodiac River, which prevents migration safe and unimpeded fish in accordance with Article 20 of the Fisheries Act, with a partial bridge. The proposed \$ 68 million is only possible if an agreement still to be concluded between the federal and provincial governments.

Yesterday, Mr. Desjardins has confirmed that the rumor could already hear Riverkeeper maintains its request to the Federal Court since the federal government has not yet ruled on the matter.

"We have reached a milestone recently when the provincial government has clearly signaled its intention to proceed. But it was an incomplete stage. Now we need the federal government is hardening too. Minister (of Fisheries and Oceans, Loyola Hearn) must ensure the implementation of the Act (Fisheries), but it still refuses to do so," says Desjardins.

The application for judicial review is intended, first, to obtain a statement from the Federal Court said that federal and provincial governments currently violate the Fisheries Act.

It then aims to obtain a statement urging the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Hearn, to take steps to correct the situation.

Mr. Hearn, who was in Moncton about two weeks before the announcement of the provincial government, had said then that the federal government had a responsibility in the matter.

"I am open on this issue. I will do whatever it takes," he had said then.

But since the announcement, the minister did not rule on the issue.

"We just feel that the government (federal) turned around, because for several years, it was he who sought to encourage the province to act. So we expect a statement of Federal Minister of Fisheries, at this time. We sent a letter to the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Hearn) in March, so it's been five months already, and we still have not received an acknowledgment, nor any news of him " , says Desjardins.