



# Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River

Water Resources Regional Body

## Conseil régional des ressources en eau des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent

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## QUÉBEC COMPLETES HISTORIC PROTECTIONS FOR GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE RIVER BASIN

Québec— On June 11, the Québec Government, led by Premier Jean Charest, enacted historic protections for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The law implements the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement (Agreement), which includes a ban on new or increased diversions of water from the Basin, with limited exceptions.

Québec's Bill 27 fulfils its commitment to pass legislation implementing the Agreement and follows the National Assembly's approval. Québec's action completes the legislative process to implement the Agreement by each of the ten Great Lakes States and Provinces.

Premier Charest said, "Through this historic action, Québec has reaffirmed its commitment to protecting the waters of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. Our continued pledge is to conserve and protect our vital water resources for our children and for future generations."

Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels, Regional Body Chair, said, "I applaud Premier Charest and the Québec Government for their leadership in protecting our shared resource. This will help protect the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River."

Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, Chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council, added, "Québec has taken an important step for our



region in meeting the promises we have made. The Great Lakes Premiers and Governors continue to take the lead in protecting North America's water belt and strengthening our economy.”

Previously, each Great Lakes State and the U.S. Congress approved the companion Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact (Compact) which became effective on December 8, 2008. Ontario passed the Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act in 2007, fulfilling its commitment to pass legislation implementing the Agreement.

The Agreement and Compact include the following:

- Lasting economic development will be balanced with sustainable water use to ensure Great Lakes Basin waters are managed responsibly.
- There is a ban on new or increased diversions of water from the Basin or between Great Lake watersheds. Limited exceptions could be allowed, such as for public water supply purposes in communities along the boundaries of the Basin, but exceptions would be strictly regulated.
- The States and Provinces will use a consistent standard to review proposed uses of Great Lakes water.
- Regional objectives for water conservation and efficiency have been developed, and they will be reviewed every five years. Each State and Province will develop and implement a water conservation and efficiency program to support the regional objectives.
- The collection of technical data will be strengthened, and the States and Provinces will share the information, which will improve decision-making by the governments.
- There is a strong commitment to continued public involvement and engagement of First Nations and Tribes in the implementation of the agreements.

Further information on the Regional Body, the Agreement and the Compact can be found at [glsregionalbody.org](http://glsregionalbody.org)

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