

Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement

Québec Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Progress Report – December 2012

The following information should be included in reports on water conservation and efficiency submitted to the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council by the States and Provinces in order to comply with the requirements of Article 300 of the Agreement and Section 3.4.1 of the Compact.

1. Main responsible ministry and contacts.

The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement, de la Faune et des Parcs (MDDEFP) (Sustainable Development, Environment, Wildlife and Parks) is mandated to implement the Agreement in Québec.

Representative of Premier Pauline Marois to the Regional Body (to be confirmed):

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2. State of progress of a State's or Province's water conservation and efficiency goals and objectives that meet the general watershed goals and objectives. If any document exists that sets out the goals and objectives of a State or Province, it should be included, or a link provided to the electronic version.

On May 24 2011, the Government of Québec adopted 15 water conservation and efficiency objectives based on 5 major goals that comply with the regional watershed objectives adopted by the Regional Body on December 4, 2007. Details on the 5 goals and 15 objectives are available on the ministry's Web site (<http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/eau/grandslacs-en/2005/orientation-objectif.htm>) and are set out in point 4 of this document.

3. Overview of the water conservation and efficiency program.

a) References to the laws, regulations and policies of the water conservation and efficiency program of the State or Province.

- The *Act to Affirm the Collective Nature of Water Resources and Provide for Increased Water Resource Protection (Water Act)* was adopted on June 11, 2009

- The *Regulation respecting the charges payable for the use of water* was enacted on December 1, 2010 and came into force on January 1, 2011
- The *Regulation respecting the framework for authorization of certain projects to transfer water out of the St. Lawrence River Basin* was enacted on June 22, 2011 and came into force on September 1, 2011
- The *Regulation respecting the declaration of water withdrawals* was adopted on August 12, 2009, amended on June 22, 2011, and came into force on September 1, 2011
- The *Draft regulation respecting water withdrawals and water protection* was published on December 28, 2011

b) Short description of the water conservation and efficiency program of the State or Province, indicating which components are voluntary and which are mandatory.

Québec is currently developing a water conservation and efficiency program that identifies the measures that will enable it to meet the 15 water conservation and efficiency objectives it set. The program covers not only that part of its territory covered by the Agreement but in fact, all of Québec.

The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement, de la Faune et des Parcs (MDDEFP) coordinates the work of all participating Québec ministries, which are : Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire (Municipal Affairs, Regions and Land Occupancy), Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation (Agriculture, Fisheries and Food), Ministère des Transports (Transport), Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (Education, Recreation and Sports), Ministère des Finances et de l'Économie (Finance and the Economy), Ministère des Ressources naturelles (Natural Resources), Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie (higher Education, Research, Science and Technology) and the Secrétariat des Affaires autochtones (Aboriginal Affairs).

In order to develop the initial version of the program, which will be implemented as of September 1, 2013, the MDDEFP first prepared an inventory of all measures related to water conservation and efficiency already in place in the various participating ministries. The inventory revealed that numerous measures are already in effect or are being developed that would contribute to achieving the objectives that have been set.

While the measures may differ in nature, it is worthwhile mentioning a few examples of measures already in place :

- In order to quantify the volume of water withdrawals throughout its territory (Objective 5) Québec adopted the *Regulation respecting the declaration of water withdrawals*, which compels all withdrawers of 75 m³ or more per day to submit reports.

- Work is under way at the MDDEFP to develop a Web-based water knowledge portal in order to make information on water resources, water quality, aquatic ecosystems and various types of water use more accessible to all water actors and users (Objective 13).

- Banking on the development of cutting-edge water technology (Objective 11), the MDDEFP has contributed to the implementation of a development strategy for Quebec's environmental and green technology industry.

- In order to spur water actors and users to adopt best practices that ensure use sustainability (Objective 3) within the framework of the Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du Territoire's *Strategy for Water Use Efficiency*, Québec has made financial assistance to municipalities conditional on water use and leakage reduction measures. Up to now, nearly 600 municipalities that account for 90 % of the total population served by water distribution networks have implemented or will implement the Strategy's water efficiency measures.

4. Declaration of findings on how the state or provincial program meets each regional objective. See further details on each objective at the following Web site: <http://www.gslsregionalbody.org/Docs/DOF/2010PCEDOF/QC%20Declaration%20of%20Finding%201-7-10.pdf>

The fifteen Government of Québec water conservation and efficiency objectives are grouped into five goals based on regional objectives.

OBJECTIVES	LEGISLATIVE OR PROGRAM REFERENCES
<p>Focus programs on long-term sustainable water use.</p>	<p>Goal 1: Act to ensure water supply sustainability by taking account of ecosystems and water uses.</p> <p>This goal expresses Québec's determination to ensure that the supply of water is sufficient for ecosystem protection and long-term use.</p> <p>Three objectives have been defined in order to achieve this. The first aims at amending Québec's water legislative framework and, if required, developing new laws. The 2009 <i>Act to Affirm the Collective Nature of Water Resources and Provide for Increased Water Resource Protection (Water Act)</i> provides for a new withdrawal authorization system that includes permits that can be renewed at ten-year intervals, among other features.</p> <p>The second objective is to maintain water quality in sufficient quantity to ensure ecosystem integrity. With this objective, Québec underlines the importance given to maintaining the integrity of ecosystems that provide ecological services that are vital to maintain long-term water use.</p> <p>The third objective consists in spurring water actors to adopt best practices. A number of changes to behaviour and/or practices will be encouraged through various initiatives, including awareness measures.</p>
<p>Adopt and implement supply and demand management practices that promote efficient water</p>	<p>Goal 2: Adopt and implement a water availability and withdrawal management system that takes account of the anticipated impact of climate change.</p>

OBJECTIVES	LEGISLATIVE OR PROGRAM REFERENCES
<p>resource utilisation and conservation.</p>	<p>This goal meets the expectations of Article 203 of the Agreement on the decision-making standard for the management of withdrawals and consumptive uses, which dictates that reasonable use must consider efficiency in order to avoid waste and seek a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection. It expresses Québec’s determination to manage water supply (availability) and demand (withdrawals) in ways that take account of ecosystem protection and use sustainability in the context of climate change that requires adaptive measures being put in place.</p> <p>Objective 4 details the need to take account of the consequence of climate change in the dynamics of water supply and demand.</p> <p>Objective 5 underlines the necessary tools being put in place with respect to water withdrawal knowledge and monitoring throughout Québec.</p> <p>Objective 6 brings together all non-regulatory initiatives that work to reduce the use of water in the residential, industrial, commercial, institutional and agricultural sectors.</p>
<p>Improve water conservation and efficiency program monitoring and standardize the contents of reports submitted by States and Provinces</p>	<p>Goal 3: Implement water conservation and efficiency program monitoring.</p> <p>In the context of the development of a water conservation and efficiency program, an evaluation framework has been prepared that enables the program’s objectives to be met (Objective 7). The findings will become a source of knowledge and know-how for the signatories of the Agreement and for all water actors in Québec (Objective 8).</p> <p>This measure meets the expectations of Articles 300 and 301 of the Agreement that deals with water management program review.</p>
<p>Broaden scientific, technological and research knowledge</p>	<p>Goal 4: Encourage scientific research, technology development and knowledge acquisition.</p> <p>Article 302 of the Agreement stresses how important it is for the Parties to strengthen the scientific basis for sound water management decision-making and guide the “collection and application of scientific information to the development, transfer and application of science and research related to Water conservation and Water use efficiency.”</p> <p>In order to achieve this, Objective 9 stipulates the need to shore up water conservation and efficiency knowledge acquisition efforts in order to guide the program towards the most efficient and significant measures possible.</p> <p>Objective 10 aims to foster research partnerships, multidisciplinary studies and cooperative activities.</p> <p>Understanding that innovation is a key factor in program success, Objective 11 banks on the development of cutting-edge water technology.</p>

OBJECTIVES	LEGISLATIVE OR PROGRAM REFERENCES
<p>Design public awareness programs and promote sharing information with all water users</p>	<p>Goal 5: Make water actors and users aware, provide them with information and tools and mobilize them.</p> <p>Québec acknowledges the importance of the role it will play in making this new way of using water known, since generally speaking, the population believes that the province’s water resources are endless. This Strategy aims at using the complementarity of various measures in order to change mentalities, perceptions, habits and ways of doing things.</p> <p>Objective 12 is aimed at making water actors and users aware of the value of the resource.</p> <p>Objective 13 seeks to ensure all water actors and users can more easily access information about water resources, water quality, aquatic ecosystems and various types of water use.</p> <p>Objective 14 seeks to provide water actors with the tools and concrete means to support their water conservation and efficiency efforts.</p> <p>Finally, Objective 15 seeks to recognize, underline and highlight the remarkable efforts made by water actors and users with respect to the principal water conservation and efficiency issues in the municipal, industrial, agricultural, commercial and/or institutional sectors.</p>

5. Description of timetable and implementation progress of the state or provincial water conservation and efficiency program of the State or Province

The water conservation and efficiency program is expected to be adopted by September 1, 2013. However, some program components are already in effect.

Québec will monitor its water conservation and efficiency program annually and will make a report available to the public. Québec will also report on its program to the Regional Agreement Body at five-year intervals.