

# Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement

## Quebec’s program for the conservation and efficient use of water

**The following information shall be included in the Water Conservation and Efficiency Program reports submitted by the States and Provinces to the Regional Body and Compact Council pursuant to the requirements in the Agreement Article 304 and the Compact Section 4.2.2.**

**1. Lead agency/agencies and contact person(s).**

Le ministère du Développement durable, de l’Environnement et des Parcs (*Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks*) is responsible for enacting the Agreement in Quebec.

Representing Prime Minister Jean Charest for the Regional Body:

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**2. Status of the State’s or Province’s water conservation and efficiency goals and objectives consistent with the Basin-wide goals and objectives. If developed, include State or Provincial goals and objectives or link to electronic version.**

On May 24, 2011, the government of Quebec adopted 15 water conservation and efficiency objectives. They are grouped into five major orientations based upon the Basin-wide goals and objectives adopted by the Regional Body on December 4, 2007 (<http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/eau/grandslacs-en/2005/orientation-objectif.htm>).

ORIENTATIONS	OBJECTIVES
<p><b>Goal 1: Foster long-term sustainable water use that takes ecosystem health and varied water uses into account</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Review existing laws and enact new legislation as needed (<a href="#">An Act to affirm the Collective Nature of Water Resources and Provide for Increased Water Resource Protection</a>, adopted June 11, 2009)</p>
	<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Promote efforts to maintain adequate water quantity and quality to ensure ecosystem integrity</p>
	<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Encourage all water stakeholders and users to adopt best practices to ensure long-term water uses</p>

ORIENTATIONS	OBJECTIVES
<p><b>Goal 2:</b> Adopt and implement a supply and demand management approach that takes into account the expected impacts of climate change</p>	<p><b>Objective 4:</b> Take into account the impact of climate change on water supply and demand</p>
	<p><b>Objective 5:</b> Accurately measure the amount of water withdrawn, consumed, and disposed of in Québec. (<a href="#">Regulation to amend the Regulation respecting the declaration of water withdrawals</a>, adopted June 2011)</p>
	<p><b>Objective 6:</b> Promote reduced water use in the residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, and agricultural sectors (An initiative to help us meet this objective: le Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Territorial Occupation’s <a href="#">Québec’s Strategy for Drinking Water Conservation</a>, released March 2011)</p>
<p><b>Goal 3:</b> Implement monitoring measures for water conservation and efficiency programs</p>	<p><b>Objective 7:</b> Develop a process to evaluate whether objectives are being met</p>
	<p><b>Objective 8:</b> Make monitoring a source of new knowledge and know-how for Agreement signatories and all other water stakeholders and users</p>
<p><b>Goal 4:</b> Promote scientific research, technological development, and knowledge acquisition</p>	<p><b>Objective 9:</b> Support research efforts on the impacts of water conservation and efficiency measures</p>
	<p><b>Objective 10:</b> Foster research partnerships, multidisciplinary research, and other cooperation activities</p>
	<p><b>Objective 11:</b> Encourage the development of innovative water technologies (An initiative that will help meet this objective: <a href="#">A development strategy for Québec's environmental and green technology industry</a> by the Ministry of Economic Development, Innovation and Exportation, the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife, released May 2008)</p>
<p><b>Goal 5:</b> Develop education programs, information sharing networks, resources and tools to mobilize all water stakeholders and users</p>	<p><b>Objective 12:</b> Make water stakeholders and users more aware of the value of water (An initiative that will help meet this objective: <a href="#">Regulation Respecting Charges Payable for the Use of Water</a>)</p>
	<p><b>Objective 13:</b> Make information on water resources, water quality, aquatic ecosystems, and the various uses of water more accessible to all water stakeholders and users (To this end Québec created the <a href="#">Bureau des connaissances sur l’eau</a> in 2008)</p>
	<p><b>Objective 14:</b> Ensure that water stakeholders and users have access to water conservation and efficiency tools (An initiative that will help meet this objective: <a href="#">Guide de gestion des eaux pluviales</a>, released February 2011)</p>
	<p><b>Objective 15:</b> Recognize exemplary water conservation and efficiency actions by water stakeholders and users in the various sectors targeted by the Agreement</p>

### **3. Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Overview.**

#### **a) Citations to State/Provincial Water Conservation and Efficiency Program implementing laws, regulations and policies.**

- Act to Affirm the Collective Nature of Water Resources and Provide for Increased Water Resource Protection (Water Act), adopted June 11, 2009;
- Regulation Respecting Charges Payable for the Use of Water, adopted December 1, 2010 and entered into law January 1, 2011;
- Regulation Respecting the Framework for Authorization of Certain Projects to Transfer Water out of the St. Lawrence River Basin, adopted June 22, 2011 and entered into law September 1, 2011;
- Regulation to amend the Regulation Respecting the Declaration of Water Withdrawals, adopted June 22, 2011 and entered into law September 1, 2011;
- Quebec's Strategy for Drinking Water Conservation, published March 28, 2011.

#### **b) Summary description of the State's or Provinces Water Conservation and Efficiency Program including what elements are voluntary and mandatory.**

Quebec is in the process of designing its water conservation and efficiency program, in which the actions allowing Quebec to attain its 15 conservation and efficiency objectives will be identified. The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks will coordinate the work of the various ministries involved. A certain number of actions have already been completed, others are being completed, and yet more are anticipated.

In particular, the aspect of the program concerning municipalities is addressed by Quebec's Strategy for Drinking Water Conservation published by the ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire (*Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Territorial Occupation*). The Strategy aims to provide municipalities with the tools they need to conduct a clear and accurate analysis of water use for each jurisdiction while taking into account accepted standards. The Strategy includes two goals:

- To reduce by at least 20% average per capita water consumption for all of Quebec no later than December 31, 2016, or a consumption of 622 liters per person per day;
- To reduce water loss through leaks in municipal water works by up to 20% of total water produced.

#### **4. For each of the regional objectives, identify how the State/Provincial program is consistent with the regional objective, and a description of how the State or Province promotes Environmentally Sound and Economically Feasible Water Conservation Measures.**

The fifteen government objectives for water conservation and efficiency are grouped among five orientations that will eventually become the five courses of action for Quebec’s water conservation and efficiency program.

<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>LEGAL REFERENCES FOR THE PROGRAM</b>
<p><b>Guide programs toward long-term sustainable water use</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 1:</b> Foster long-term sustainable water use that takes ecosystem health and varied water uses into account</p> <p>This goal affirms Quebec’s desire to ensure that water supplies are sufficient to protect ecosystems and maintain long-term use. The Act to Affirm the Collective Nature of Water Resources and Provide for Increased Water Resource Protection (Water Act) of 2009 provides for the adoption of a new permitting mechanism for water withdrawals as well as the issuance of renewable permits that are valid for ten years.</p>
<p><b>Adopt and implement supply and demand management to promote efficient use and conservation of water resources</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 2 :</b> Adopt and implement a supply and demand management approach that takes into account the expected impacts of climate change</p> <p>This goal addresses the requirement found in article 203 of the Agreement (Decision-Making Standard for Management of Withdrawals and Consumptive Uses), stating that the reasonable use requirement includes 1) providing for efficient use of the water and avoiding or minimizing its waste and 2) finding a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection. The goal represents Quebec’s desire to act in such a manner that managing supply (water availability) and demand (water withdrawals) takes into account the protection of ecosystems and maintaining uses within the context of climate change and the requisite need to deploy adaptive measures. To that end, a strategy for adapting to climate change, with a chapter on water management, is being developed. In addition, the Water Act provides for instituting a new withdrawal permitting mechanism that will allow Quebec to address these issues.</p>
<p><b>Improve monitoring and standardize data reporting among State and Provincial water conservation and efficiency programs</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 3 :</b> Implement monitoring measures for water conservation and efficiency programs</p> <p>Quebec will adopt a system to monitor water conservation and efficiency measures to transmit useful information to water actors and users that meets the requirements of articles 300 and 301 of the Agreement with respect to water management programs.</p> <p>Article 300 states that “Each Party shall submit a report to the Regional Body, detailing the Water management and Water conservation and efficiency programs that implement this Agreement in their jurisdiction.” As such, monitoring various actions will be consolidated to determine to what degree water conservation and efficiency objectives are met.</p> <p>In addition, article 301 underscores the importance of “develop[ing] and maintain[ing] a compatible base of Water use information,” specifically in order to improve scientific knowledge. The Regulation Respecting the Declaration of Water Withdrawals, adopted in 2009 and amended in 2011, requires withdrawers to declare their withdrawals.</p>

OBJECTIVES	LEGAL REFERENCES FOR THE PROGRAM
<p><b>Develop science, technology and research</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 4 :</b> Promote scientific research, technological development, and knowledge acquisition</p> <p>Article 302 of the Agreement underscores the importance for the Parties to strengthen the scientific basis for sound water management decision-making and to support “[t]he development, transfer and application of science and research related to Water conservation and Water use efficiency.” Quebec has developed a specialization in the research fields of natural sciences and engineering as well as human and social sciences that could contribute greatly to these efforts. Quebec can also draw upon the recognized capacity to innovate by a large number of companies in the province. In short, Quebec possesses all the qualities needed to meet its obligations to reduce its water use and use its water resources more efficiently as specified in the Agreement. To that end, the Development strategy for Quebec’s environmental and green technology industry adopted by the Ministry of Economic Development, Innovation and Exportation, the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife will likely be improved.</p>
<p><b>Develop education programs and information sharing for all water users</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 5 :</b> Develop education programs, information sharing networks, resources and tools to mobilize all water stakeholders and users</p> <p>This goal focuses on the complementary nature of measures to change mentalities, perceptions, habits and practices. To begin with, it is vital to continue awareness-raising efforts already underway in Quebec. Next, it is necessary to continue information campaigns since they are an excellent means of raising public awareness and education. It is also essential to take concrete actions that build upon public awareness efforts. This explains why it is necessary to 1) provide tools to and mobilize water users by providing the means to reduce water use and use it more efficiently and 2) highlight results attained through responsible use. To do so, a Water Use Portal is currently being developed that will include tools to increase awareness regarding water conservation and efficiency destined for the entire population of Quebec. This is but one example of the actions that will become part of the overall awareness-related work related to Quebec’s Strategy for Drinking Water Conservation published by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Territorial Occupation for the municipal sector or the annual campaign to reduce water use by the group Réseau Environnement.</p>

**5. Description of the State or Provincial water conservation and efficiency program implementation timeline and status.**

- The water conservation and efficiency program should be adopted and in force on or before September 1, 2013. However, certain aspects of the program are already underway;
- Quebec will evaluate its water conservation and efficiency program on an annual basis and will make its evaluation public. In addition, Quebec will submit to the Regional Body a report on its program every five years.