

# Premier

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## Sustainable Development

Québec is among the most natural-commons-dependent economies in the world. Protecting and preserving biodiversity is a great challenge facing societies.

Addressing environmental issues demands a bold vision, an integrated strategy and coherent action. And that is the approach the government has adopted by placing [environmental protection](#), [sustainable development](#), conservation of [biodiversity](#), [creation of protected areas](#), and [responsible water management](#) at the heart of its priorities.

### Also see:

[Le Québec en action vert 2020](#)

[Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs \(MDDEP\)](#)

- [Biodiversity and protected areas](#)
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## Biodiversity and protected areas

Preserving biodiversity is a major issue of the 21st century. The Government of Québec is a leader on this front and is very proactive, by, among other things, creating protected areas.

From 2002 to 2009, Québec made giant strides by protecting nearly 200 new natural territories each year. Today there are more than 2,500 protected areas covering over 8% of Québec's land base, in other words, more than 135,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The [Portrait du réseau d'aires protégées au Québec](#) presents these important advances.

The government intends to continue its conservation efforts in the coming years so that this network will span 12% of the territory by 2015. It has adopted [strategic guidelines](#) for achieving this and other goals for protecting and enhancing Québec's natural heritage.

## Fighting climate change

Climate change and global warming are issues facing all of the world's States. Accordingly, governments must assume their responsibilities and develop strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Québec is taking leadership on this front with an ambitious target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 20% below the 1990 level by 2020, and with a number of measures to achieve that target.

The [Québec Energy Strategy](#), the [Public Transit Policy](#), the [2006-2012 Climate Change Action Plan](#), funded through the [carbon tax](#), and the [Residual Materials Management Policy](#) show that the government is taking an integrated approach to fighting climate change.

## Long-term vision

For the government, sustainable development planning means meeting the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable development consists in maintaining the integrity of the environment to secure the health and safety of human communities and preserve ecosystems, in ensuring social equity for the full development of all women and men, the growth of communities and respect for diversity, and in being effective in creating an economy that is innovative and prosperous as well as environmentally and socially responsible.

This important, long-term vision is expressed through the development of green energy and technologies, the export of clean energy, natural resource exploitation, and government-supported efforts to reduce our dependence on oil. All of Québec's development initiatives are carried out with a view to sustainable development.

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