

Press release



The Québec Economic Plan - \$40.9 million to ensure the efficient management and development of Québec's network of protected areas

Montréal, May 22, 2018 – In conjunction with Budget 2018-2019, in which the Québec government announced unprecedented investments in the environment sector, \$40.9 million in appropriations have been paid to the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques (MDDELCC) to ensure the efficient management and development of Québec's network of protected areas.

Minister of Sustainable Development, the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change Isabelle Melançon noted the initiative today in Montréal, where she participated in the ceremony marking the 25th anniversary of the United Nations *Convention on Biological Diversity*.

The investments announced in March will enable the MDDELCC, by way of an example, to:

- pursue the organization of consultations in several regions of Québec to ensure the social acceptability of proposed protected areas and determine the adaptations necessary, if need be, to encourage community support;
- financially support voluntary conservation initiatives in wetlands on private lands, for example in southern Québec;
- target, together with coastal communities, proposed marine protected areas in the St. Lawrence estuary.

Moreover, the funds allocated will support the MDDELCC's efforts to manage and develop the 100 or so protected areas created since 2000 and the protected areas that will be established in the coming years. In particular, the funding will ensure access by the public to protected areas and that recreational activities are carried out safely. To this end, partnerships with the regions and the Aboriginal communities can be concluded.

“Starting in 1992, Québec, as a federated state, declared itself bound, by Order in Council, to the principles and objectives of the United Nations *Convention on Biological Diversity*. Twenty-five years later, it is continuing to incorporate biodiversity-related concerns into all of the major policies that ensure its sustainable development. Today marks the International Day for Biological Diversity and I am proud to highlight the Québec government's sustained efforts to protect biodiversity and to have announced the \$40.9 million in funding to attain the government's objectives respecting protected areas and to ensure their long-term survival.”

Isabelle Melançon, Minister of Sustainable Development, the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change

Highlights:

- The Québec government has committed itself to attaining by 2020 17% protected areas in terrestrial zones and internal waters, including 20% in the territory that the Plan Nord covers, and 10% in offshore and coastal zones.
- Québec now has some 4 760 natural sites that satisfy the definition of a protected area. As of March 31, 2018, Québec had 156 709 km² of protected areas, equivalent to 9.40% of its area and approximately 325 times the area of Montréal Island. The network of marine protected areas encompasses 1.35% of Québec's marine environment, equivalent to 1 957 km².
- Since 2011, efforts to pinpoint territories to be protected carried out by the MDDELCC and regional stakeholders have led to the inventorying of 100 new proposed protected areas to be studied to enable Québec to achieve its targets.

Related links:

The Québec Economic Plan — March 2018:

http://www.budget.finances.gouv.qc.ca/budget/2018-2019/fr/documents/PlanEconomique_18-19.pdf

Expenditure Budget 2018-2019:

<http://www.tresor.gouv.qc.ca>

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