



Québec's Plan for a Green Economy: a roadmap for a clean recovery

Government: Québec

Region: North America

Sector(s): Green recovery

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Summary

In the fall of 2020, Québec presented its new climate change policy framework: the Plan for a Green Economy 2030. The electrification of the economy is a key component of the Plan and will contribute to a green and fair economic recovery.

The Green Economy Plan is the most ambitious approach to climate transition and economic transformation that Québec has adopted to date. This policy framework will contribute to the international effort to mitigate climate change, while strengthening Québecers' ability to adapt to its impacts.

Québec has vast hydraulic resources that it has been able to develop for the production of hydro-electricity. Taking advantage of this clean, renewable and abundant energy source represents an opportunity to create jobs and generate economic benefits for all Québecers. This is why the Green Economy Plan 2030 focuses on electrification to support the economic recovery and the climate transition simultaneously.

Québec has committed to a 37.5% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 below 1990 levels. To that end, the 2030 Plan for a Green Economy (2030 PGE) will put Québec on a path that is consistent with the objectives of the Paris Agreement and will have a powerful impact on Québec's economy. It will accelerate the climate transition and create jobs in such key sectors as clean technologies, new renewable energy industries and electromobility. It will be supported by five-year implementation plans and assessed and revised annually to take into account changing circumstances and technological developments.

The first implementation plan covers the 2021-2026 period and comes with a budget of CA \$6.7 billion. Several pivotal lines of action will be pursued in this effort to combat climate change, including transportation electrification and the transformation of the economy.

Transportation electrification

Québec intends to build on the clean, abundant and affordable electrical energy it has at its disposal to launch a large-scale electrification project in the transportation sector. The government will focus in particular on electrifying public transit, light-duty vehicles, heavy and specialised trucks, and deploying charging infrastructure.

The following are some of the measures that will stimulate transportation electrification:

- Continuing to offer rebates on the acquisition or rental of electric vehicles and charging stations;
- Tightening the requirements of the zero emission vehicle standard to encourage manufacturers to supply the Québec market with more vehicles and a greater diversity of models;
- Prohibiting the sale of new gasoline-powered vehicles as of 2035;
- Gradually electrifying school, city and intercity buses, thereby stimulating economic activity in this niche where Québec has solid expertise.

In launching this large-scale transportation electrification project, the government wants to make it a major lever for economic development and outreach beyond its borders by exporting Québec expertise and all products and services related to the green economy: trucks, buses, batteries, specialised vehicles, charging stations, etc.

Main objectives for 2030

- 1.5 million electric vehicles, i.e., 30% of light-duty vehicles, on Québec roads;
- 55% of city buses and 65% of school buses will be electric;
- 100% of government cars, SUVs, vans and minivans and 25% of its pickup trucks will be electric.

Transformation of the economy

The Government of Québec has recognised that in order to achieve its climate objectives, initiating profound transformations in the economy has become crucial. Consequently, it will build on its clean energy to electrify the economy, as well as on the emergence of strategic future-oriented sectors that will account for an increasing share of our GDP, jobs and exports in the coming years.

The main measures that Québec intends to implement to begin the transformation of its economy will support the following:

- Replacing fossil fuels with Québec-produced electricity, which has one of the lowest carbon footprints in the world since it is derived from sources that are more than 99.8% renewable, primarily hydropower.
- Innovating in the electrification, bioenergy and green hydrogen fields, especially in the industrial and heavy transport sectors;
- Initiatives targeting renewable natural gas (RNG) production and distribution in order to increase the amount of RNG in the gas network;
- Developing innovative products in the electric vehicle industry and battery recycling sector.

Québec intends to position itself as a leader in the production of clean energy sources that are complementary to electricity, taking into account the specific energy needs of each sector. The government also wants to make Québec the green battery of northeastern America. To accomplish this, it is focusing on developing the battery sector, from lithium mining to battery assembly and including research and development.

Main objectives for 2030

- Implementing energy efficiency and energy conversion projects for the industrial sector;
- Eliminating oil in favor of electricity for heating buildings;
- Increasing bioenergy production by 50%;
- Reaching a level of 10% renewable natural gas in the network.

A just and inclusive transition

Furthermore, with an eye to a just transition, the government will seize the opportunity provided by the climate challenge to foster greater equity and better social inclusion in Québec.

Workforce training issues will be examined in order to fully benefit from job opportunities arising from the climate transition. An ongoing social dialogue with the public will make it possible to give more consideration to the needs of vulnerable people, including those who are more affected by climate change, as well as the needs and concerns of future generations. Particular attention will be paid to the health and quality of life of Indigenous and northern communities.