A strategic centre of international maritime transport
With its Maritime Strategy, Québec is articulating a vision for the future of international trade based on one of its most important natural resources, the St. Lawrence River.

The main gateway to North America

Some 1,200 km long, the St. Lawrence River provides unique, direct access to the heart of North America.

The St. Lawrence Seaway, the largest navigable waterway in North America, provides the shortest route between Europe and the American Midwest as well as privileged access to North-eastern North America and its 135 million consumers.

The Canada–New England circuit provides international cruise lines with a wide variety of itineraries linking American and Québec cities. The economic spin-offs of this product have been growing steadily since 2008. The Tourism Component of the Maritime Strategy will make the St. Lawrence a world-class tourism icon that will be a source of pride for Quebecers, attract the attention of foreign clienteles and benefit from sustainable development initiatives with significant economic spin-offs.

We want Québec to be the mega-hub of transatlantic trade.

Philippe Couillard
Premier of Québec
A strategic location for investing

The Maritime Strategy places Québec at the forefront of the major changes that are ongoing in the maritime transport sector:

The signing of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union (CETA) together with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will enable Québec to position itself as one of the main import-export logistics hubs between Europe and America.

The Maritime Strategy will bolster the development of the Plan Nord by facilitating access to Northern Québec and to maritime infrastructures. Québec’s transportation know-how and expertise in northern environments will be used to their full potential.

Intermodal transport infrastructures: the cornerstone of international trade development in North America

Québec currently boasts a highly efficient intermodal system:

A highway network connected directly to the Ontario and American (Interstate) highway systems.

Five border crossings through which the majority of trucks heading to the United States transit: Windsor-Detroit, Niagara-Fort Erie, Sarnia, Lacolle and Lansdowne.

Three rail networks: Canadian Pacific (CP), Canadian National (CN) and CSX Transport.

Three international airports: Montréal and Québec City as well as Montréal-Mirabel, which is exclusively devoted to freight.

The international Port of Montréal as well as the ports of Québec and Sept-Îles.

The Maritime Strategy focuses on the strategic development of this comparative advantage. The Government of Québec is committed to:

Setting up a logistics cluster in the Greater Montréal region to provide a business environment that will attract private transportation and logistics-related investments in order to make Montréal a go-to destination in North America.

Guaranteeing the complementarity of highway and railway infrastructures with port development projects and developing a logistics chain that will reduce transportation costs for exporters and importers.
A sustainable development project

With its Maritime Strategy, Québec is once again leading the way in sustainable development by introducing the following measures:

Ensure safe and environmentally friendly maritime transport by implementing programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide assistance for improving maritime transport efficiency and by developing a liquefied natural gas market.

Meet the international conservation target by setting aside 10% of its maritime territory for marine protected areas.

Play a role in the blue economy by funding research and development at its internationally renowned institutions: Institut des sciences de la mer (ISMER) at Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR) and Centre de recherche sur les biotechnologies marines (CRBM).

Québec was born from its relationship with the sea. And the sea is also part of our future.

Philippe Couillard
Premier of Québec