AN EXEMPLARY NORTHERN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
A LONG-TERM VISION FOR NORTHERN QUÉBEC

With the Plan Nord, the Québec government aims to harness the North’s mining, energy, forestry, social, cultural and tourism potential, and create jobs and wealth for Québec. By harmonizing economic, social and environmental aspects, the Québec government intends to make the Plan Nord a reference for responsible sustainable northern development and a unifying project for Québec society.

By 2035, the Plan Nord will have enabled the development of this rich resources area, for the benefit of its populations and of the whole of Québec, through an exemplary form of sustainable development based on a comprehensive, integrated, consistent and responsible approach.

The area covered by the Plan Nord

The Plan Nord applies to all of Québec located north of the 49th parallel and north of the St. Lawrence River and Gulf of St. Lawrence – an area totaling 1.2 million square kilometres.

The area has a population of 120,000. One third of the inhabitants are Aboriginal and belong to four nations: the Inuit, Cree, Innu and Naskapi.

Economic potential that is as vast as the territory

Mining potential

The area covered by the Plan Nord produces all of Québec’s nickel, cobalt, platinum group metals, zinc, iron ore and ilmenite, and accounts for a significant portion of gold and diamond production. Apatite, lithium, vanadium, graphite (and graphene) and rare earth metals are also found there.

Energy potential

As the world’s fourth largest producer of hydroelectricity, Québec is building on this clean, renewable energy source, which is at the core of its industrial activity. Nearly 75% of Québec’s hydroelectric production takes place in the area covered by the Plan Nord, and its hydraulic, wind and solar development potential continue to be considerable.

Forestry potential

Northern Québec includes over 200,000 km² of forests, which account for 53% of Québec’s operable forests. The annual harvest potential totals 11.8 million cubic metres of lumber.

Wildlife and tourism potential

With its diverse cultures, unique landscapes and exceptional wildlife potential, northern Québec has all the advantages for becoming a world-class tourist destination.
The Société du Plan Nord is responsible for the deployment of the Plan Nord. Its role is to contribute to the integrated and coherent development of the area covered by the Plan Nord in collaboration with representatives from the regions and Aboriginal nations concerned, as well as the private sector, in accordance with the principle of sustainable development and government policy directions. It will also inform Québec and international companies of supply and equipment needs and will serve as a liaison between suppliers and major contractors.

**Governance structure focused on collaboration**

The Société du Plan Nord is supported in its actions by the Assembly of Partners, an innovative consultation structure. Its role is to provide an opinion to the Société and the government on matters the Société submits to it in relation to its mission and activities. The body is composed of representatives from local and Aboriginal communities, business and social sectors, and environmental groups. In this way, the Québec government hopes that the Plan Nord’s implementation will be deployed according to a partnership-based approach.
Three policy directions for implementing the Plan Nord

• Develop the diversified economic potential of northern Québec in a responsible way and for the benefit of the people living there and Québec as a whole.

• Support the development of the communities in the area covered by the Plan Nord to help them realize their full potential and improve their living conditions.

• Protect the environment and preserve the distinctive biodiversity of northern Québec by ensuring that mechanisms are put in place to dedicate 50% of the area covered by the Plan Nord to non-industrial purposes, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation by 2035.

Conditions for success

• Facilitate access to the area by developing and improving road, rail and maritime links.

• Facilitate access to clean, economical energy in the area covered by the Plan Nord.

• Improve telecommunications infrastructure for the entire area covered by the Plan Nord.

• Increase scientific knowledge and its application, especially through the establishment of the Institut nordique du Québec, an interdisciplinary, inter-institutional centre for research and innovation that will provide the scientific knowledge and technical expertise necessary for the sustainable development of northern Québec.
MAJOR INVESTMENTS BETWEEN NOW AND 2035

Between 2015 and 2020, some $360 million will be devoted to northern development through the Plan Nord Fund. This amount, combined with contributions from government departments and bodies, will allow Québec to support initiatives totaling $1,340 billion, including the implementation of economic, social and environmental projects.

Public and private investments of over $50 billion are planned by 2035 in the area covered by the Plan Nord.

Québec: your next business destination

An advantageous business environment

It costs less to do business in Québec because:

• in terms of taxation, the corporate tax rate is one of the lowest in North America, at 29.90%;
• the capital tax was abolished in January 2011;
• Québec’s tax system offers some of the world’s most advantageous investment and R&D incentives;
• the public health system significantly reduces employers’ contribution to employee benefit plans.
One of the world’s strongest financial sectors

Canada’s and Québec’s well-regulated financial sector demonstrated its soundness during the most recent global financial crisis.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) ranks Canada as the best G7 country and the fourth worldwide for doing business in 2012-2016.

In April 2012, Moody’s stated that the Canadian banking sector was the most robust in the world.

Reliable hydroelectric energy at extremely competitive prices

Energy costs are on average 30.6% lower in Québec than in G7 countries. Québec provides access to green, renewable energy. A comparison of commercial and industrial kilowatt hour rates shows that, as a result of the hydroelectricity produced in Québec, the rates available are significantly more attractive than those in major North American cities and leading industrialized countries.
THE PLAN NORD’S BASIC PRINCIPLES

- A planned, coordinated project based on partnership, private-sector investment and support for communities, in particular through the creation of the Société du Plan Nord.
- A focus on sustainable development that integrates economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- Government actions adapted to the realities of local and Aboriginal communities and to the northern area as a whole.
- A harmonious and ethical approach to development that remains respectful of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities and is mindful of gender equality.

The Plan Nord gives foreign companies and the international community an opportunity to participate in a groundbreaking sustainable development project destined to become a model for economic, social and environmental development.

For more information about the Plan Nord, visit plannord.gouv.qc.ca.