

GREENPEACE

Quebec provincial Elections 2007

17 questions to Quebec's main political parties

In order to provide more adequate information to its members, Greenpeace traditionally sends a questionnaire to Quebec's main political parties during each electoral campaign. According to the most recent polls, the environment ranks first among Quebecois' concerns, so the time is now ideal for perpetuating this tradition.

For each question you may want to send a comment to our members. Please send your answers either by mail before **Friday, March 9** at 5:00 P.M. to the Greenpeace office (454 Laurier East, Montreal, Quebec, H2J 1E7), or by e-mail to jocelyn.desjardins@yto.greenpeace.org. Please notice that our team will grade each party according to a methodology that you will find readily on our Internet site: (takeaction.greenpeace.ca/quebec-elections07/).

The questions that we ask refer to vital issues that will certainly affect the quality of life of the citizens of Quebec in the short, middle and long run. So you are invited to read them carefully, thinking about the general background surrounding the issues involved... Make your choice by simply ringing the letter corresponding to the answer you choose.

Thank you for your collaboration

Forest Protection

In 2004 the Coulombe Commission revealed that the Boreal Forest was exploited and that it was urgent to act to ensure its protection. Yet only 15% of the Boreal is still intact. Less than 5% of Quebec territory is officially protected from industrial operations. We should be told what must be protected before we are told what should be cut.

1. Would your government adopt a moratorium on cuts and industrial development in intact forests - among the last intact areas of trees larger than 500 km² - with the aim of increasing the extent of protected areas?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Independent science

When it comes to protecting the forest, Quebec's provisions pales by comparison to other jurisdictions. Costa Rica protects 34% of its territory, Australia 18%, Canada 8%, British Columbia 12%, and Ontario 9%. Yet Quebec must respect the UN Convention on Biodiversity, since Canada, which signed it, is legally bound to create a network of protected areas before 2010.

2. Would your government implement a credible and legitimate process, based on scientific research independent from government and industry, aimed at evaluating the percentage of protected areas necessary for maintaining the structure and integrity of the Boreal Forest, and at identifying the territories worthy of preservation?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Economic diversification of mono-industrial communities

After several years of negotiations and a moratorium on cuts, British Columbia, in February 2006, signed the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement, which ensures the preservation of more than two million hectares of temperate coastal forest. On January 21 of this year, an endowment fund of \$120 millions was created to finance conservation and economic diversification projects, bolstering the agreement.

3. Is your government favourable to the idea of creating an endowment fund, made up of both public and private funds, to ensure the protection of the Boreal Forest and the diversification of the economy of the communities depending on the forest?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Ecosystem-based management of the forest

The Coulombe Commission stressed the importance of leaving a healthy forest to the generations to come, and it made 81 recommendations for changing the way the forest is managed in Quebec. At the heart of this is a shift to ecosystem-based management.

4. Would your government develop an action plan to implement not only the recommendation for ecosystem-based management of Quebec's forests, but all of the Coulombe Commission's recommendations?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Buying forests-friendly paper

Quebec's Boreal Forest is one of the last ancient forests on Earth. It is being clearcut to make office stationary, paper towels and bathroom tissue destined to be used, among other places, in government buildings. However, there exist alternative tissue products made without destroying our public forest!

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5. Would your government implement a purchasing policy for all paper used by the government that gives priority to paper made from 100% recycled fibre or which contain fibre certified by the Forest Stewardship Council?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Mandatory labelling of GMOs

In its 2004 report on food safety, the Commission de l'agriculture, des pêcheries et de l'alimentation du Québec unanimously recommended that the government of Quebec require the mandatory labelling of genetically modified food. It also said that in the case of products derived from GMOs, or which contained such organisms, the obligation to label begins at a minimum threshold set in harmony with the one in the European Union. Consequently::

6. Will your government adopt, within 12 months following its election, legislation or regulations requiring the labelling of food that contains genetically modified organisms, or GMOs?
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 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Absolute liability following genetic contamination

When it comes to genetic contamination by GMOs in Quebec or the rest of Canada, there is no absolute legal framework for ascribing liability at all, so the farmers who are the victims of this contamination just cannot defend themselves properly. Yet farmers are legally protected from this type of contamination in Switzerland, Germany, Norway and in the state of Vermont.

7. Does your party promise that the next Quebec government will adopt legal framework for delegating responsibility in the event of genetic contamination due to GMOs in order to adequately protect those who are victims of such contamination, in particular farmers?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Alternatives to GMOs

To involve the agricultural industry more deeply in global market is not the only option possible. On a global scale, only a small fraction of farmers trade internationally. Consequently, it is better to strengthen the agricultural networks of production instead of replacing them with a global market that will primarily feed the most affluent people. Accordingly, since Quebec agriculture is largely oriented towards market production, it should rethink its policies. Sustainability requires vision, clear fundamental objectives and plenty of common sense.

8. During the next parliament, will your government establish budget policies and enact measures to develop alternatives to GMOs, such as organic agriculture?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Phasing Out Nuclear Power in Quebec – Gently-2

Quebec's only nuclear reactor, Gently-2, must be closed or rebuilt at an estimated cost of \$1.4 billion in 2010. Hydro-Quebec's board of directors is expected to decide whether or not to proceed with the reconstruction of Gently-2 early in 2008. Thus, the next government of Quebec will decide whether Quebec will continue to live with the risk of nuclear power.

Greenpeace believes that Gently-2 should be shut down in 2010, and the money invested in green energy and conservation programs.

1. Will your government shut down Gently-2 in 2010 in order to invest the money it spends on it, or intends to spend on it, in renewable energies and conservation programs?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Government Accountability on the Future of Nuclear Power

In 2004 the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) held public hearings on Hydro-Quebec's proposal to expand its interim radioactive waste site to receive waste from the rebuilding and life-extension of Gentilly-2, beginning in 2010. The BAPE report contained a series of recommendations concerning the future of nuclear power in Quebec. Neither the present government nor Hydro-Quebec has publicly responded to these recommendations despite the fact that Hydro-Quebec is set to make a decision regarding Gentilly-2's future in early 2008.

2. Will your government publicly respond by mid-2007 to the 2005 BAPE recommendations on Gentilly-2??
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Transparency on the Gentilly-2 Decision

As part of its recommendations Hydro-Quebec's application to expand its radioactive waste site in 2005, the BAPE declared that broader issue of whether Quebec continue to live with nuclear power is a fundamental "choix de société" and that the provincial government should establish a transparent process for determining the whether Quebec will continue to depend on nuclear power and rebuild Gentilly-2.

During the 2004 hearings of the BAPE many public interest organisations complained that Hydro-Quebec had neither finished nor released its economic and safety studies to justify the reconstruction of Gentilly-2.

3. Will your government refer Hydro-Quebec's proposal to extend the life of Gentilly-2, including its economic and technical studies, to a review of the BAPE for broader public review and scrutiny before any decision is made by the government or Hydro-Quebec on the future of Gentilly-2?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

High-level Radioactive Waste

High-level radioactive waste (spent fuel) remains deadly for a million years and there is no social or scientific consensus on the best long-term management strategy. In 2005, a federal agency (the Nuclear Waste Management Organisation – NWMO) recommended that Canada's stockpiles of buried used fuel waste be buried in either Ontario, Saskatchewan or Quebec.

The Bourassa government, however, declared in 1985 that a permanent high-level nuclear waste dump would never be accepted within Quebec or near its borders. The current Liberal government reaffirmed this policy during hearings of the BAPE in 2004. Gentilly-2 has produced over 2,500 kilograms of high level radioactive waste since it began operation in 1983.

4. Will your government maintain the Bourassa government policy against the establishment of permanent high-level radioactive waste dump (for spent fuel) in or near Quebec's borders?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Other Radioactive Wastes

In addition to high-level radioactive waste, Gentilly-2 produces a range of so-called ‘low’ and ‘intermediate’ radioactive wastes that must also be isolated from the environment and humans for a million years. The 2005 BAPE hearings revealed that Hydro-Quebec had no plan for managing the long-lived radioactive wastes created by the reconstruction of Gentilly-2.

The BAPE recommended that Hydro-Quebec should be required to propose “une solution réaliste et acceptable socialement” for managing Gentilly-2 non-fuel radioactive wastes. Hydro-Quebec has not responded to the BAPE report or made any proposals for the long-term management of these radioactive wastes.

5. Will your government direct Hydro-Quebec to propose publicly a technically feasible and socially acceptable plan for long-term management of its long-lived non-fuel radioactive wastes before any decision is made on the future of Gentilly-2?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Solar Hot Water in Quebec

Solar hot water systems are a mature and cost-effective technology that can provide 50% of residential hot water needs, and can also be used for space heating. The overall lifetime cost of a solar hot water system is low because sunlight is free! However, uptake of solar hot water has been very slow because of its high initial cost compared to conventional systems (a typical residential solar hot water system costs \$4000 to \$5000).

Solar hot water systems can lower Quebec's electricity demand significantly, thereby reducing the need for fossil and nuclear generation.

In order to provide a meaningful incentive, governments need to provide an incentive of about 20 to 25% of the initial cost. Environmentalists have called for a national "Million Solar Roof" program, with provincial commitments to 100,000 roofs.

14. Will your government establish a program to provide financial support for a 100,000 solar roof program in Quebec?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Light rail transit and tramways

The transportation sector produces nearly 40% of the greenhouse gas effect (GHG). The most important increase in GHG emissions since 1990 occurred in this sector. The greatest increase will still be observed in this sector until 2012. A car and a driver alone make a major contribution to air pollution, causing urban smog and numerous public health problems.

15. Will your government launch mass transit projects such as a light rail transit between Montreal and the South Shore as well as tramway projects in Quebec City, Gatineau and Montreal?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Increased mass transit budgets

For every dollar invested in infrastructure, the government of Quebec spends only something like 25 cents in mass transit, depending upon the years involved and the party in power.

16. Will your government increase the operating budgets of mass transit companies?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above

Reduction of greenhouse gases emissions (GHG)

Great Britain, France and California have strategies for reducing GHG emissions by 80 % by 2050.

17. Will your government implement a strategy to reduce GHG emissions by 80% by 2050 as have Great Britain, France and other countries?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not know
 - d. None of the above