

Joint federal and provincial announcement: Funding of more than \$21 million for genomics in Québec

Montréal, December 8, 2016 — The Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science, and Dominique Anglade, Minister of Economy, Science and Innovation, announced today funding in the amount of \$10.8 and \$10.4 million respectively for genomics in Québec. This welcome news demonstrates the resolve of the federal and provincial governments to making research and innovation one of their core strategic priorities.

Daniel Coderre, President and CEO of Génome Québec, was pleased with our governments' renewed support of the excellent genomics work being carried out in Québec universities. The funding will primarily be used to finance genomics projects that aim to find sustainable, cost-effective solutions for the environment and natural resources.

The teams of **Sébastien Sauvé** (Université de Montréal) and **Niladri Basu** (McGill University) were particularly successful under the Genome Canada competition, Natural Resources and the Environment: Sector Challenges – Genomic Solutions. Among co-funded teams, Québec has also emerged as a strong leader in the forestry sector, with the pan-Canadian projects spearheaded by Jean Bousquet, Richard Hamelin and Ilga Porth, all from Université Laval.

The competition aims to promote the use of genomic approaches to address challenges facing the natural resources and environmental sectors. The research funding provided will contribute to the Canadian bio-economy and the well-being of Canadians.

Quotes

“These new genomic research projects strengthen Canada’s position as a leader in producing evidence-based solutions to come of our grandest challenges. In addition to growing the economy and improving the quality of life for middle class Canadians, they will accelerate our drive toward clean technologies and other approaches that will safeguard our water and biodiversity, lower our carbon footprint and protect our environment.”

– *The Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science*

“The co-funding of large-scale research projects will stimulate research in the natural resources and environmental sectors. The combined support by the Canadian and Québec governments will help capitalize on the transformative power of genomics and make a concrete contribution to the well-being of our communities and the protection of our environment.”

– *Dominique Anglade, Minister of Economy, Science and Innovation and Minister Responsible for the Digital Strategy*

“Today’s announcement illustrates the resolve of our governments to align and focus their efforts on disruptive technologies, such as genomics, which has tremendous potential for our economic development. The performance of our researchers demonstrates that Québec made the right decision when it opted to support genomics research over the years, leading to the development of a critical mass of expertise and cutting-edge infrastructures. In coming years, we are convinced that genomics will yield sustainable solutions for environmental issues.

– *Daniel Coderre, President and CEO of Génome Québec.*

“A growing number of genomics applications and real-world solutions are emerging day by day and our researchers here at the Université de Montréal are making an outstanding contribution to this progress. I commend the genomics and environmental research teams led by Professor Sauvé. They are using their ingenuity, creativity and passion to further a cause that’s important to us all – the quality of our water. I would also like to applaud the Canadian and Québec governments for supporting these initiatives, which will improve our environment.”

– *Guy Breton, Rector, Université de Montréal*

“Chemical contamination threatens our planet’s health. Thanks to the vision and support of Genome Canada and Génome Québec, the genomics-based assessment tool developed by McGill researchers will give us an accessible, affordable, and reliable means to fulfill our crucial role as stewards of our ecosystems—and of our future.”

– *Suzanne Fortier, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, McGill University*

“Our research team is actively contributing to innovative strategies on preventing and treating contaminants in water sources. For us, genomics research plays a leading role in solving problems facing our environment and natural resources.”

– *Sébastien Sauvé, Professor at Université de Montréal and Academic Director of Institut EDDEC*

About Génome Québec

Génome Québec is an economic development organization that contributes to strengthening the competitiveness of the genomics innovation system in order to maximize its socioeconomic impact in Québec. It does so by funding major genomic research initiatives and putting in place the tools necessary for scientific and strategic development in the field.

The funds invested by Génome Québec are provided by the ministère de l’Économie, de la Science et de l’Innovation du Québec (MESI), the Government of Canada, through Genome Canada, and private partners.

For more information, visit www.genomequebec.com.

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LIST OF PROJECTS

[ATRAPP – Using genomics to predict, prevent and treat excess algae growth and its related risks](#)

Sébastien Sauvé from Université de Montréal is leading a research team that is working on a series of diagnostic tools using chemical genomics. The goal of this toolbox is to assess the risk of toxicity in water sources and support municipalities and water quality stakeholders in implementing prevention and treatment strategies. This method represents an alternative to the current water treatment plants, which are considered at risk and required to rely on costly treatment processes to eliminate cyanobacteria and their toxins. The team will also work on determining the best water treatment processes to prevent the proliferation of toxins in drinking water and ensure the safe elimination of toxic sludge.

[EcoToxChip: A toxicogenomics tool for chemical prioritization and environmental management](#)

At McGill University, Niladri Basu and his team are working on developing, testing, validating and commercializing the EcoToxChip, a tool designed to help regulators and other stakeholders overcome the tremendous uncertainty associated with current risk assessment approaches. The chemical contamination of our ecosystems is considered one of the greatest threats to life on earth. The EcoToxChip will provide the global community with a leading-edge toxicology analysis platform that will be accessible, affordable and reliable, and deliver consistent results.

[BioSurveillance of alien forest enemies \(BioSAFE\) • with Ilga Porth \(Université Laval\)](#)

The goal of the project is to develop a new set of tools for the accurate screening of four invasive alien species currently threatening our forests.

[Spruce-Up: Advanced spruce genomics for productive and resilient forests • with Jean Bousquet \(Université Laval\)](#)

The goal of the project is to produce advanced knowledge, support tools for socio-economic decision making and applied genomics tools to significantly improve traditional spruce selection programs in order to ensure forest health, wood quality and long-term productivity.

[CoAdapTree: Healthy trees for new climates • with Richard Hamelin \(Université Laval\)](#)

The goal of the project is to develop better reforestation tools for tree species of high economic value, such as the Douglas fir, shore pine, western larch and jack pine.