An invitation... to educate and act for a sustainable future

Picture the world we want to live in and find a way to build it – does that kind of challenge interest you? That’s what the Brundtland Green Establishment (BGE) movement is all about: youths and adults joining forces, rooted in the hope of a better world, trying to make our dream a reality day by day.

Joining the BGE movement means getting youths and adults to start thinking about the world around us. It means trying to understand and decide together what we want. But above all, it means developing discerning, responsible citizens who are capable of taking action to create a world that fulfils their aspirations. Is it a starry-eyed, utopian dream to hope for a better world?

Looking at the huge challenges that face human beings in today’s world, this project becomes an urgent necessity! Anyone who takes a hard look at the environmental, social, and economic legacy that we are about to leave for future generations will see the problem. Here at home and around the world, we all share the same planet, with its limited resources and space, and we must learn to live together better, in peace and in harmony with nature.

From dream to reality

Do you share this dream? Are you already taking actions, no matter how small, to help improve the world? More than 800 establishments in Québec have accepted the invitation from the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) and its partners to join the BGE movement. Together, these youths and adults are working toward building an environmentally friendly, peaceful, united, and democratic world.

Obtaining or renewing BGE status is one way of identifying, highlighting, and gaining exposure and recognition for the daily efforts that your establishment is making to improve society.

Utopia is tomorrow’s reality.
Victor Hugo
**What is a Brundtland Green Establishment (BGE)?**

A BGE is a establishment where people think globally and act locally in order to create a viable feature. In other words, it’s a place were people take concrete and ongoing action to help build an environmentally friendly, peaceful, united, and democratic world. It’s a establishment that highlights the commitment of youth and adults, by publicizing and gaining social recognition for their actions. It’s a establishment that opens up to the community and the world, and proudly displays its accomplishment and actions, no matter how modest!

According to meteorologist Edward Lorenz’s “butterfly effect” theory, when a butterfly flaps its wings in one part of the world, it can set off a tornado on the other side of the planet. The BGE butterfly promotes the idea that every action, no matter how small, can change the world.

**The BGE movement is…**

- a movement that was launched in Québec in the early 1990s by the CSQ and its partners;
- a network of educational and health institutions whose members share a hope for a better world;
- a forum to discuss ideas, projects, successes, and concerns related to education for a sustainable future (ESF);
- a network whose actions are supported by many community organizations;
- a movement that offers regional and national educational campaigns;
- a team that provides pedagogical support for member establishment;
- a movement that provides meaningful projects for youths and adults, leadership, and teaching material that fits into the establishment curriculum, among other things.

**Why “Green”? Why “Brundtland”?**

A establishment is green because it cares about the environment; and Brundtland because it takes action that involves sharing, cooperation, equity, solidarity, respect, peace, and human concerns, among other things. These are among the major concerns discussed in the Brundtland report, entitled Our Common Future (1987), produced by the World Commission on the Environment and Development, which is chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland.

**Think globally, act locally!**
Environmentally friendly. Ecology involves a certain worldview. It means thinking globally while acting locally. As a science, ecology is based on knowledge of the relationships between species, and between individuals of the same species and their environment. When applied to humans, ecology means taking a critical look at the systems that govern human activity, being aware of the environmental impact of the activity, and conversely, of the effect that these changes have on humans. Aspiring for an environmentally friendly world means learning to recognize your responsibility for your physical surroundings, and learning to live symbiotically with nature.

Pacifism is a commitment to attain one’s objectives by non-violent or non-aggressive means. On a personal level, it means recognizing every human being’s right to live in security and meeting their basic needs. It means opposing any actions that deprive others of these inalienable rights. On a social level, it means ensuring respect for human rights, universal access to water, air, food, medical care, and social justice. It means opposing violence and war between human groups – whether for ethnic, religious, ideological, or gender-related reasons, or to appropriate resources. It means working toward the establishment of permanent international peace.

Solidarity means recognizing the ties that we have to one another and to our social, ecological, and cultural environments. It means realizing that human beings are dependent on one another, and that we have a mutual responsibility to the extent that what happens to others affects us all. This solidarity is also intergenerational: today’s generation owes a debt to its ancestors and will leave behind a legacy for its successors. It also means recognizing the existence of a commonwealth that must be shared equitably by all of the creatures that populate our planet. It means maintaining established wealth distribution systems and protecting the most disadvantaged.

Democracy means providing people with a means of living together that benefits everyone. It is a system by which people can change leaders peacefully, and in which the government has the right to govern because the people gave it that right. Good governance is based on the principles of equal rights, opportunity, and treatment, as well as respect for a number of fundamental freedoms, including freedom of thought, speech, and association. Fighting for a democratic world means opposing tyranny, injustice, corruption, inequality, competition, and the power of money. Good citizens learn about rights and responsibilities, and participate in civic life and in supporting the common good.
Concrete action!
The BGE movement is based on an integration-oriented educational trend – education for a sustainable future – that enables those involved to give meaning to the educational efforts that they are already making.

Education for a sustainable future (ESF)
ESF is human-centred. It aims to harmonize relations between individuals, and between people and their environment. It explores the economic, social, and environmental ramifications of our thoughts and actions. It endeavours to create responsible citizens, who are capable of engaging in personal and group action aimed at building an environmentally friendly, peaceful, united, and democratic world.

ESF means translating the four values and the guidelines of BGE into action. It means teaching youths and adults to fully assume their roles as responsible citizens.

Here are few examples of concrete projects:
• An ENVIRONMENTAL program to reduce the consumption of energy and resources, and to encourage reuse and recycling;
• PEACEFUL involvement in awareness campaigns to combat sexism, racism, and violence;
• A SOLIDARITY project aimed at assembling Christmas baskets for needy families in the community;
• A DEMOCRATIC group effort to get the municipality to build a bicycle path, introduce recycling collection, or improve public transit;
• An ENVIRONMENTAL project to naturalize the schoolyard and build birdhouses;
• A PEACEFUL project to establish a procedure for conflict resolution;
• SOLIDARITY through participation in an intercultural exchange between youths and adults from here and elsewhere;
• A DEMOCRATIC project to establish cooperation councils and student councils.

BGE Guiding Principles – the 6 R’s
A Brundtland Green Establishment is a establishment that follows the 6 R's for a sustainable future:
Reducing consumption of resources (e.g.: using both sides of a sheet of paper)
Reusing things (e.g.: creating toys and art from recycled material)
Recycling products (e.g.: composting)
Rethinking our value systems (e.g.: peaceful conflict resolution)
Restructuring our economic systems (e.g.: fair trade)
Redistributing resources (e.g.: organizing a flea market in order to help the needy)
Join the EVB Movement

Why me? Why us?

• To gather, validate, promote, and socially recognize what you are already doing.
• To guide you through the introduction of certain elements of the Québec Education program.
• To equip you to develop an ESF (Education for a Sustainable Future) project.
• To add direction and motivation to your activities.
• To contribute to creating hope and increased interest among young people and adults.
• To promote your establishment to the community and the world.
• To create better synergy between your establishment and the people and organizations in your region.
• To benefit from the support of an educational network in the development and execution of your projects.

Subscribing to and contributing to the EVB movement is an asset rather than an addition!

Benefits:

• An EVB activity guide that provides means and resources, as well as an annual action plan;
• Support from resource persons at the CSQ and its affiliates, including retired teachers;
• Excellent resourcing opportunities during national and regional sessions hosted by the EVB movement (exchanges, training, debates);
• Tools to support your activities during the process of obtaining or renewing your EVB status: posters, banners, EVB promotional videos, etc.;
• Support for a national or regional program aimed at recognizing your EVB achievements;
• Visibility in informational tools that are produced by the CSQ and its affiliates, and in the regional and national media;
• The support and expertise of partner organizations and EVB contributors;
• The presence of national and local VIPs during regional and national EVB recognition activities;
• EVB status, symbolically represented by Gaia, Goddess of the Earth, an original photolithography by painter Benoit Simard that will be given to you as a testimony to your commitment;
• …and much more, because with a movement as energizing as this one, tomorrow can only get better!
Tools to support your efforts

The EVB movement can provide you with a variety of educational and instructional tools. Support your activities with our interdisciplinary approaches related to the project pedagogy, cooperation, and awareness. These tools these are designed and published by the CSQ and its partners.

Educational and pedagogical tools

- **The EVB site**: An Internet site that is hosted by the CSQ, including proposed activities, opportunities for discussion, project ideas, information concerning EVB achievements, and much more (http://evb.csq.qc.net).

- **Ensemble, recouperons notre planète**: pedagogical education booklet relating to the on-line environment.

- **Des watts entre les deux oreilles**: pedagogical education booklet relating to the rational use of energy

- **Le BAC**: a segment of the EVB site that is dedicated to the ecological management of residual materials in the establishment environment.

- **Terre comprise**: educational kit and televised series relating to current social and environmental challenges.

- **Des idees dans l'air (DIDA)**: educational kit relating to climate change.

- **Educational kits for operation Construire une citoyenneté responsable**: **Tirer le diable par la queue !** (Fight against poverty), **D’un commerce agréable… et équitable** (For Beneficial Fair Trade – Responsible consumption and fair trade), **La Terre dans votre assiette** (The Earth on your Plate – Eating responsibly), **S’Investir dans nos communautés… en citoyens du monde** (Investing in our communities… as world citizens - Community commitment).

- Videos with themes related to pacifism, ecology, solidarity, and democracy.

Other educational tools pertaining to a variety of topics, including the management of residual materials, the rational use of energy, the elimination of violence and poverty, health, peace, and cultural diversity.

Reading to inspire your activities

- **Éduquer et agir pour un avenir viable** (2001)

- **Orienter l’école pour un monde écologique, pacifique, solidaire et démocratique** (2003)

- **Cadre de référence pour un projet éducatif ESF-EVB** (2001)
  - **Pour une participation efficace aux conseils d’établissement** (2000)
  - **Déclaration de principes sur l’éducation de la CSQ** (1996)

All of these documents, and many more, are available from the EVB secretary’s office or the CSQ documentation centre.
How to become an Établissement vert Brundtland?

Are you interested in the EVB Movement? If you are, it’s probably because your establishment already carries out activities aimed at developing a world that is ecological, peaceful, united, and democratic. Just name them…

To register, fill out and send us a copy of the enclosed registration form. You will receive many suggestions for activities, the detailed list of criteria for recognizing EVBs, and all other information that is necessary in order to support you in your efforts. Each year, you must send us a brief statement of your achievements that demonstrate that you satisfy the criteria for obtaining or renewing EVB status. Your establishment will then be officially recognized as an EVB establishment.

A real challenge! Criteria for obtaining and renewing EVB status

• Carry out or initiate at least two activities that demonstrate your continued commitment to the EVB movement.

For example, the introduction of a Brundtland Committee; the integration of EVB Movement values in the establishment’s policy or the education project; a commitment from the governing board; participation in a regional or national EVB network; the introduction of a plan for the management of residual materials in the establishment environment (MRMS), etc;

• Achieve or pursue at least one educational activity in each of the following four categories.

A. Within the group: for example, rollout of pedagogical activities as an ESF.
B. Within the establishment: for example, homework assistance from peers.
C. Visibility in the community: for example, cleaning river banks
D. Visibility around the world: for example, correspondence with individuals from another country.

Note that several activities integrate ecological, peaceful, solidarity, and democratic values.

Like many establishments, there is no doubt that yours already satisfies most of the criteria…Why wait any longer?

EVB status is granted to organizations that are affiliated with the CSQ and to establishments with members whose efforts are centred around ecological, peaceful, united, and democratic values (establishment, professional training centre, daycare centre, adult education centre, youth centre, administrative building, union, CLSC, hospital, etc.).

Other establishments that are not members of the CSQ can also obtain special status. Call the EVB Secretary’s Office for a detailed list of the recognition criteria.

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