

ESSENTIALS OF QUEBEC WONDERS: LAKES, FORESTS, WHALES

MONTRÉAL > MAURICIE > LAC ST-JEAN > SAGUENAY > LE FJORD DU SAGUENAY > TADOUSSAC > LE CHARLEVOIX > QUÉBEC > MONTRÉAL

Welcome to Quebec!

Forests as far as the eye can see, lakes that invite you to swim, cosmopolitan cities like Montreal and historic Quebec City, and of course... the legendary hospitality of Quebecers! This 15-day trip to Quebec offers a wonderful overview of the immense natural riches it abounds in: the lakes of the Mauricie region, the cinematic Route 155 between Grandes Piles and La Tuque, Lac Saint-Jean, the Saguenay Fjord, the whales of Tadoussac, the Hautes-Gorges-de-la-Rivière-Malbaie National Park, Montmorency Falls...

On foot, by canoe, by boat, discover Canada's XXL nature, in French... or almost!

 Region	Eastern Canada
 Activity	Family Self-drive Summer
 Duration	15 days
 Code	CAEQCA01ALT
 Price	From €2,052
 Level	1/5
 Comfort	4/5

ITINERARY

Day 1 Montreal



Stopping in Montreal means entering the French-speaking metropolis of North America, diving into a city that is capable of combining its history with its modernity, and appreciating the dynamism of a community that is constantly evolving. Take advantage of your evening in town to taste the famous poutine!

- Accommodation: Hotel

Day 2 Montréal



It's time to discover the city, on foot or by bike. Do not hesitate to visit the Old Port district, where you will find the famous Ferris wheel and the majestic Basilique Notre-Dame.

- Accommodation: Hotel

Day 3 Montréal / Mauricie national park



Pick up your rental vehicle in downtown Montreal and drive to the well-known Mauricie National Park! Take full advantage of nature and access the superb hiking trails along the magnificent river! Let yourself be lulled by the flow of the river as you stroll through the wilderness.

- Accommodation: Lodge

- Transportation: approx. 139 mi, approx. 2h45

Day 4 Mauricie national park



Enjoy a day out in nature. Live a full experience as you go on a hike, or try a full-day trip by canoe. At the end of the day, follow your local guide and meet the local black bears.

- Accommodation: Lodge

📍 Day 5 **Mauricie national park / Lac Saint Jean**



A day's drive to reach the shores of Lac St-Jean, but not just any road! The portion of Route 155 between Grandes Piles and La Tuque is spectacular, offering unique views of the rivière Saint-Maurice. Relax during these two nights at the magnificent Chalet de Chambord.

- Accommodation: Cabin

- Transportation: approx. 130 mi, approx. 2h15

📍 Day 6 **Lac Saint-Jean**



Experience the vastness of Lac Saint-Jean. Are you a water sports enthusiast or a hiker? Whatever your desire of the day, you will inevitably find your happiness in the host of activities offered on the site.

- Included activity : Zoo St-Félicien

- Accommodation: Cabin

📍 Day 7 **Lac St Jean / Saguenay**



On the way to the Parc National du Fjord-du-Saguenay. The only navigable fjord in North America, it is home to more than 16 marine species typical of the Arctic. A breathtaking landscape.

- Accommodation: Cabin

- Transportation: approx. 68 mi, approx. 1h20

📍 Day 8 **Saguenay**



Via Ferrata, does this word mean anything to you? It would be a mistake to miss this activity by being there. Hang on to climb the rock to the Bridge and prepare to cross the void on an 262ft long suspension bridge!

- Accommodation: Cabin

📍 Day 9 **Saguenay / Saguenay Fjord national park**



Boat or kayak will allow you to sail the mysterious waters of the Fjord. You can also discover it by keeping your feet on the ground and going for a discovery hike.

- Accommodation: Cabin

- Transportation : approx. 112 mi, approx. 2h30

📍 Day 10 **Saguenay Fjord national park**



Still some energy for this new day? Go on a Fatbike and get off the beaten track. Take the time to explore the Saguenay Fjord national park and all his wonders.

- Accommodation: Cabin

📍 Day 11 **Saguenay Fjord national park / Tadoussac / La Malbaie**



Head to Tadoussac, a maritime crossroads composed of the fleuve Saint-Laurent and the Saguenay Fjord. It is the ideal place to go and meet the whales. A word of advice: take part of a boat cruise that will allow you to get closer to it without disturbing them. After this experience, continue on the Charlevoix region, well-known for its delicious local gastronomy.

- Included activity : whale watching by boat
- Accommodation: Ready-to-camp
- Transportation: approx. 143 mi, approx. 3h15

📍 Day 12 **La Malbaie**



Mandatory stop at Parc national des Hautes-Gorges-de-la-Rivière-Malbaie and its more than 100 km of hiking trails. And why not challenge the river currents on a rubber dinghy?

- Accommodation: Ready to camp

📍 Day 13 **La Malbaie / Québec city**



Let yourself be seduced by the narrow cobbled streets of Québec City. The picturesque old town is also a World Heritage Site of UNESCO. You will not be able to miss the Château Frontenac which overlooks the top of the city.

- Accommodation: Hotel
- Transportation: approx. 87 mi, approx. 1h50

📍 Day 14 **Québec city**



A few steps from Québec City is the Montmorency Falls. Take the panoramic circuit to admire the 83 m high waterfall and even cross the suspension bridge above to feel its full force.

- Accommodation: Hotel

📍 Day 15 Québec city / Montréal



The time for the return flight has come. You can drop off your rental car directly at the airport.

- Transportation: approx. 171 mi, approx. 3h

PERIOD & BUDGET

When to travel?

The best period for travelling is during the following months:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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Price

From C\$2,890 / person (based on two people)

The budget is an indication of the price per person, subject to availability. Your local agent will send you a customized quote with the exact price. The price can vary according to availability, level of services, period of travel, number of participants, booking time frame and other items.

Included

- 14 nights' standard accommodation
- 14-day rental of a mid-range Hyundai Elantra or equivalent, unlimited mileage, LDW and ALI insurance, local taxes, airport fees, one tank of gas and one additional driver
- Roadbook (electronic version)
- The following activities: visit to the Saint-félicien Zoo (4h), bear watching with a local guide (1h30) and whale watching cruise in Tadoussac (2h)
- Canadian taxes (federal and provincial)
- 24-hour assistance
- Meals mentioned

Not included

- International flights (available on request)
- Gasoline
- Personal expenses
- Meals not mentioned
- Beverages (except tea and coffee for included meals)
- Entrance fees to national parks
- Optional activities not mentioned
- Travel insurance

International flights

Why bother with multiple reservations? We can offer you your entire holiday under one roof, and we'll be there to help you if you have any problems. As we have excellent contracts with major airlines in both Canada and the USA, we're in a position to help you take advantage of our low prices. All you have to do is specify it when you request your initial quote, in the "Describe your project precisely" box on our form, and we'll be happy to include it in our proposal.

Terms and conditions

Inscription

By registering for one of our travel, the customer bindingly accepts the General Terms and Conditions of Sale. Each customer must complete a registration form. The booking is definitively recorded when the customer has settled the payment of a deposit of 30 % of the total travel price (subject to availability at the time of registration). In case of short term bookings – within 30 days prior to the travel departure – the full travel price is due immediately. Payments can be settled via bank transfer (SWIFT code/IBAN number) or online, directly from our website (soon available). You will receive an email with a booking confirmation as quickly as possible

Invoice procedure

Once your booking is registered, we send you an email with the invoice. Full payment is required at least 30 days before your arrival. If the customer does not settle the payment of the travel price within the period agreed upon, Altaï Canada reserves the right to cancel the booking free of charge.

Cancellation policy

If for any reason, you decide to withdraw from a journey, the amount already paid will be refunded subject to the following exceptions:

- Cancellation up to 45 days prior to the agreed beginning of the journey: You will be charged 20 % of the travel price, in addition with every non-refundable expense for additional services booked on request (internal flights, site entrance tickets, activities...)
- Cancellation between the 44th and 15th day prior to the agreed beginning of the journey: You will be charged 50 % of the travel price, in addition with every non-refundable expense for additional services booked on request (internal flights, site entrance tickets, activities...)
- Cancellation less than 14 days to the agreed beginning of the journey: You will be charged 100 % of the travel price, in addition with every non-refundable expense for additional services booked on request (internal flights, site entrance tickets, activities...)

Any cancellation shall be notified in writing (email, letter or fax). Notice of cancellation will be effective upon receipt by us of your written communication.

If it comes apparent at an earlier point in time that the minimum number of participants cannot be reached for a travel, Altaï Canada is to exercise his right of withdrawal immediately. In such a situation, you will be informed of the cancellation of your travel no later than 21 days prior to the agreed beginning of the journey. Altaï Canada can also cancel a travel in case of circumstances amounting to "force majeure": volcanic eruption, civil disturbances, strikes, weather and climate conditions, travellers' security... In such cases, you are immediately refunded any payments on the travel price; however, you shall not be entitled to any compensation.

Changes to travel contract

If a change to travel contract is made at the customer's request, any fee that might arise from this change shall be paid by the customer. In any cases, every request for changes shall be notified in writing. In case of external events that could not be foreseen, Altaï Canada might change some aspects of the travel contract. We will endeavour to advise you of any changes as quickly as possible.

Pricing

All group travel prices on our website have been calculated for the indicated number of participants for each trip. The price list is confirmed after the booking. If the number of participants is lower than expected, an additional payment charge might be applied. For each travel and program, we mention the price per person – valid for the minimum number of participants – and we provide you with detailed explanations about the services included or not. Any change in the exchange rates or in the price of travel services in particular regarding the cost of the fuel, might entail price revision.

Contract transfer

In case of transfer of the contract by the customer to an assignee, modification and cancellation conditions apply.

Insurance

We recommend that you get personal insurance before your departure to cover the activities undertaken by Altaï Canada. If you have not purchased your insurance directly with us, we ask that you email us your insurance contract information (company, policy name, policy number, phone number) and bring this information with you on your trip.

PRACTICAL INFO

Staff

Trip in total freedom, guideless. If you add an optional roadbook, it will consist of :

- A day by day (itinerary) description
- Destination description
- Useful tips on driving
- Cities and parks maps
- Activities description

Food

It is possible that some meals are included, seek "the price includes" on your estimate, it is however impossible (or even rare) to include all meals during a trip in total freedom.

Accommodation

Depending on the category of hotel, you will sleep in 2-star or sun (Canadian classification) rated accommodation. When you request an estimate, you can ask to be upgraded in more comfortable accommodation for some days or for all the days of your trip, near national parks or out-of-the-ordinary accommodation such as cabins in the trees, cottages or tent (Huttopia, or ready-to-camp). We offer a wide range of accommodation, from classic to original, all of our trips are flexible and can be adjusted to your desires!

Transportation

In some cases and depending on your needs, we can offer private or public transfer services such as train, shuttle, ferry or seaplane... We can also include a car rental with very interesting rates. You just have to make it clear in your initial estimate in the box "describe your trip precisely" of our form, we will be pleased to do so.

Driving in Canada :

Autotours by car are perfect to explore the great Canadian landscapes. Our country offers numerous breath-taking roads with panoramic sceneries. Traffic is generally moderate when compared to other countries.

Standard European driving license is valid in Canada. Traffic regulation is no different. The speed limit is 100 Km/h on the highway (110 km/h on certain highways in Alberta and Nova Scotia); 90 km/h on main roads; 50 km/h in urban areas. Highways are free (except for one in the Toronto region), generally well-maintained, they provide rest areas..

Traffic lights are situated on the other side of the streets intersection. There is no priority to the right: priority is indicated by road signs at each intersection. It is generally allowed to turn right when the light is red (if no road sign forbid it) in Canada, except for the Ile de Montréal.

To park your vehicle, pay attention to road signs that indicate authorized days and hours of parking. It is forbidden to park near a fire hydrant. Parking fees are sometimes required by hotels (especially in big cities) and in public parking areas. In Toronto and Montréal, parking fees can rise up to 20\$ per day. In small cities, it is easy to find free parking spaces.

Wearing a seatbelt is mandatory everywhere and at every time, for all the passengers, in the front seat and in the back seat.

Children must sit in a child car seat specially designed, adapted to their weight and height and be appropriately installed until he is tall enough to wear the seatbelt correctly.

It is mandatory to stop at more than five meters from a school bus which flashing lights blink. You can only cross or pass a school bus when its flashing lights are off. You must make sure that this manoeuvre is riskless.

In Canada, it is forbidden to drive with a blood alcohol level of more than 0.08% (80mg for 100ml of blood). Drivers younger than 25 years old and the ones who have a learner's permit are submitted to the rule of "0 alcohol" which forbids driving after alcohol

consumption.

Budget & exchange

Canadian currency is the Dollar (\$) which is divided in 100 cents. You can find 5\$, 10\$, 20\$, 50\$, 100\$ and 1000\$ bills. Although they are still in circulation, 1\$ and 2\$ bills have been replaced by coins of .05\$, .10\$ and 0.25\$.

To benefit from the best exchange rate, we advise you to exchange your currency in a Canadian bank. Generally, these institutions are open between 10 AM and 3 PM from Monday to Friday (except statutory holiday). You can also exchange your currency in exchange offices. Although the office schedule might be more flexible, exchange rate and service fees could vary considerably from office to office.

Traveler's check in Canadian dollar are accepted in most hotels, restaurants and shops. You can also exchange euros: 1 Euro = 1,57\$CAN (04/04/2018).

Before your arrival in Canada, make sure your credit card is programmed to be used in ATMs. They are open at any time in banks, airports, stations and malls. The most accepted credit cards are Visa, Mastercard and American Express.

Tips

In the United States and in Canada, service is never included in the prices. In bars, restaurants and all the places where service is provided, it is expected that you tip the waiter/waitress between 15% and 20% of the total sum. Note that a lot of employees working as waiters are paid by tips only. Not giving anything or not giving enough would be poorly received. Even when paying by credit card, you'll indicate the sum you wish to give.

Supplied equipment

See what is included in your estimate

Luggage

Depending on the size of the trunk of your rental car, make sure to choose the right size and number of luggage that you will bring.

Passport

Consular formalities for Europeans and Swiss nationals:

Upon your registration, please transmit your passport information (name, first name, passport number, date of issues and expiration). Currently, to stay as a tourist for less than six months, a visa is not mandatory and a valid passport is sufficient with a validity exceeding by one day your stay in Canada.

Travelers must imperatively have an **electronic travel authorization (eTA) to enter Canada**. You will have to fill the form online and individually (**one application per person**) on <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/ave.asp> It is essential that you have a valid email address. The 7 CAD fees are payable by Visa, Mastercard or American Express credit cards. The eTA is granted in just a few minutes but we advise you to apply for it as soon as your trip is confirmed. The eTA is an electronic document linked to your passport and **stays valid for 5 years or until the expiration of the passport**, depending on the first of these eventualities to occur. You must then travel with the passport used to apply for it.

CAREFUL: for French women, the eTA must be filled with your maiden name. Hence, to facilitate the check-in at the airport, we ask travelers in Canada to indicate their maiden name for the booking of their tickets.

You travel with children:

Children and adults are submitted to the same obligations regarding passports and visa described above. Registration of minors on parents' passports is now impossible; children must hold an individual passport. It is compulsory to apply for an eTA for each child individually.

CAREFUL, from January 15th 2017 onwards, for all French minors traveling abroad alone, an authorization to leave the country is compulsory.

The child will have to submit the three following documents:

- The minor's valid passport
- A photocopy of the signatory's identity card, valid or expired for less than 5 years and the birth certificate
- The form, signed by one of the legal guardians, available online on <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1359>

Concerning other nationalities, seek the Canadian consular authority of your country.

ARRIVAL IN CANADA VIA A TRANSIT THROUGH THE UNITED STATES :

CAREFUL, we can exceptionally use American airlines for travels bound for the American continent (North and South).

They stop over in the US: **you must possess an electronic or biometric passport which is still valid 6 months after your departure from the US** (under "passport", a rectangle under a circle meaning a secure symbol).

You must also **apply for an electronic travel authorization (ESTA)** on the official website <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Valid for a duration of two years or until the expiration of the passport, this authorization must be requested at the latest 72h before your departure: we advise you to apply to it as soon as your trip is confirmed. It has to be paid for (14 USD online by credit card). The name you put on the form must be the same as the one that figures on your plane tickets and must of course appears on your passport. If the name used on the ESTA form is different from the one on your tickets, the airline can deny your boarding. Minors must also fill out an ESTA authorization.

The Visa Waiver Program allows French nationals to enter the American territory without a visa, either via transit or for a stay of 90 days to the maximum. A visa is nevertheless necessary if you only have an emergency passport. Furthermore, travelers who went to Iran, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Yemen or Soudan since March 11th 2011 and people who are national of Iran, Iraq, Syria or Soudan cannot benefit from the Visa Waiver program anymore: more information on <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/conseils-aux-voyageurs/conseils-par-pays/etats-unis/>

ARRIVAL IN THE US OR TRANSIT THROUGH THE US :

Upon your arrival, the immigration service will take your photo and fingerprints. You'll have to wait behind the yellow line and not cross it unless you're told to, it can take some time. Customs controls will take place at the first access point to the territory (in case of a transit through a Canadian airport, it will be considered as a first access point to the US and the following process must be applied). Once you've been through the immigration service, you'll get your luggage back from the conveyer belt and go to the customs. In case of a continuation of your trip, you'll have to get your luggage back and bring them the baggage conveyer which serves.

Health information & recommendations

Canada is one of the safest destination in the world. Its crime rate is low and there aren't much endemic diseases. For a trip to Canada, no vaccination is mandatory but it is advised to be up to date concerning basic vaccinations (Diphthérie, Tétanos, Poliomyélite). Medical infrastructures are excellent but it is strongly advised to purchase medical insurance before your departure.

In case of an emergency, to call the police, firefighters or paramedics, dial 911. The "911" service could sometimes not be reachable in certain regions. You can also dial 0. A receptionist can get you in contact with emergency services.

Canada has a lot of lakes ad forests; there are numerous insects in June and July. Hence, you need to have a repellent cream and strong antihistamine for people suffering from allergies.

During your trip to Canada, you may very well be able to see some wild animals in their natural habitat. It is particularly true in wildlife reserve where originals, caribos, deer and other species are commonly observed.

In Canada, regulation about alcohol consumption can differ from what most of international travelers could expect. Apart from Québec, alcoholic beverages are sold only in specialized places and often under Government control (liquor Stores, beer stores, etc.). It is forbidden to consume alcohol in public areas. Legal age for alcohol consumption is 19 years old in Ontario and Maritime Provinces, 18 years old in Québec, Alberta and Manitoba. If you wish to drink wine or beer in certain restaurants, you have to choose a licensed place. It is possible, in some restaurants, to bring your own wine bottle, but it has to be specified. Throughout Canada, strict regulation exist to counter driving under the influence of alcohol (0.08%).

Weather

WEATHER

Spring is a rainy season in the major part of Canada. During the day, temperatures generally get high but nights still cool. The median temperature is 12°C in March, April and the beginning of May. Summer officially starts on June 21st but for most Canadians, July and August are the real summer months. It is warm in most regions of Canada. In the South, they are above 20°C during the day and can sometimes pass 30°C. Autumn starts in September. Temperature gets chillier and leaves change color and fall. This season can be very rainy. In some regions, particularly in the North and in the mountains, it may start to snow towards the end of October. During the day, normal temperatures vary between 10 and 12°C in the major part of the country.

Unlike Europe, seasons are well defined in Canada. Temperatures can get higher than 30°C in summer and down to -30°C in winter. In fact, Canadian climate changes a lot from a region or a season to another. Canada extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and lies at the same latitude as Roma at his southern extreme, where it reaches the Arctic.

To know the current climate and weather conditions by provinces and territories, go to www.meteo.gc.ca or www.meteomedia.com

Spring : Spring comes as soon as February on the West Coast. In the rest of Canada, weather gets warmer at the beginning of April and lasts until June.

Summer : Summer in Canada bring cool to hot temperatures from the end of June to the end of September. The warmth of summer last from June to August, and July is often the hottest month.

Autumn : Autumn brings pleasant and cool temperatures, particularly in September and in October. It is the best time of the year to enjoy the spectacular beauty of Autumn leaves in the East of Canada, to take long walks while breathing fresh air.

Winter : A major part of Canada is covered with a white coat during winter, temperatures fall below the freezing point, and snowfalls start at the end of October. However, winters are very cool on the West Coast where the snow doesn't stay long.

Electricity

As everywhere in the US, voltage runs at 110 Volts/60 cycles. New electric devices can be adapted to the current. It's preferable to check whether or not your device is equipped with a current transformer. In general, it is a black box located between the electric plug and your device. If your device isn't compatible with the 110-volt current, you'll need to get a current transformer sold separately. As electrical plugs are flat, you'll also need an adaptor to plug your device in. you'll find it easily on the spot or before departure in a shop specialized in travels. A waterproof Zip Lock bag is a good way to keep your equipment in a dry place.

Local time

Canada covers six of the twenty four time zones of the world. From East to West, they are identified as follow: Newfoundland time, Atlantic Time, east Time, Central Time, Mountain Time and Pacific Time. Some provinces and territories cover two time zones.

Ontario and Québec are in the Eastern Time (central European time -6 hours) whereas the maritime provinces are in the Atlantic time (Central European Time -5 hours). Note that the Newfoundland province is ahead of 30 minutes compared to Atlantic hours. In Manitoba, West of Ontario, and in Saskatchewan, the time difference to Europe is -6 hours, -8 hours in Alberta and -9 hours in British Columbia.

From the last Sunday of April to the last Sunday of October, North America goes 1-hour backward to Summer Time.

Concretely, there is an 8-hour time difference between France and Calgary, a 9-hour time difference between France and Vancouver and a 6-hour time difference between France and the East coast of Canada (Toronto and Montréal). For instance, when it's 1.00 pm in Montréal, it is 7.00 pm in Paris.

Topography

CANADIAN POPULATION

Canada has a multicultural population of 33 million of inhabitants that spreads throughout 10 provinces and 3 territories.

Ontario and Québec are the major ones from a numerical point of view (with 62.1% of the Canadian population); British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba follow, being the only provinces with more than one million of inhabitants. Territories from the North are sparsely populated.

French and English are the two official languages of Canada. In the 2001 census, English speakers constituted close to 60% of the Canadian population, whereas French speakers constituted the second group with more than 22%. Official languages are unequally spread throughout Canadian provinces. It's in Ontario that you can find the largest group of English speakers (8 million), followed by British Columbia (2.8 million) and Alberta (2.4 million). Apart from Québec (8%) and Nunavut (27.6%), English speakers are majoritarian in all the provinces and territories. French speakers are only majoritarian in Québec as they represent 81.2% of the province.

While waves of immigration of the 19th Century bring to Canada mainly people of British origins, the current immigrant population is of diverse origins. Between 1900 and 1960, immigration in Canada was essentially European (90%). The 2001 census reveals that in the last decade, 58% of the immigrants are Asian (Chinese overcame the 1-million mark) and European (only 20%).

For a certain number of years now, we call "visible minority" the minorities which are not of European origin. 20 years ago, visible minorities accounted for 4.7% of the total population, they now represent 13.4%. They will likely represent one fifth of the Canadian population by 2016.

In 1996, aboriginal populations of Canada reached 799 010, 2.8% of the total Canadian population.

Sustainable tourism

Since the outset, Altai works for an eco-tourism and an organization of trips that respects equitable and sustainable principles.

The harmonization of practices assures:

- A fair economical repartition
- The improvement of local teams' working conditions and their awareness of the protection of the environment
- The information of travelers about respecting the local population and environment and the collection of their feelings at their return.

You can also act in favor of an eco-tourism by adopting simple green gestures during your trips:

- Avoid letting waste out, throw it in the trash can or bring it with you
- Use potable water sparingly (take a shower instead of a bath and report any leaks) and avoid wasting it (use biodegradable soap to wash yourself)
- Avoid damaging cultural sites: don't touch the statues, don't move the stones and objects
- Exchange instead of giving (too Important gifts can destabilize the local economic stability of the country depending on their living standards)
- When taking a walk, especially in some fragile ecosystems, observe the fauna from afar, do not go beyond beaten roads, limit stamping and do not bring any souvenirs: give up picking rare flowers picking fossils...
- In some hotels, you can have individual air conditioning. It is advised to systematically switching it off when you're out of the room to avoid energetical overconsumption and greenhouse gas emission.