

Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk

Federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for wildlife commit to a national approach for the protection of species at risk. The goal is to prevent species in Canada from becoming extinct as a consequence of human activity.

We recognize that:

- i) species do not recognize jurisdictional boundaries and cooperation is crucial to the conservation and protection of species at risk;
- ii) the conservation of species at risk is a key component of the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy, which aims to conserve biological diversity in Canada;
- iii) governments have a leadership role in providing sound information and appropriate measures for the conservation and protection of species at risk, and the effective involvement of all Canadians is essential;
- iv) species conservation initiatives will be met through complementary federal and provincial/territorial legislation, regulations, policies, and programs;
- v) stewardship activities contributing to the conservation of species should be supported as an integral element in preventing species from becoming at risk; and
- vi) lack of full scientific certainty must not be used as a reason to delay measures to avoid or minimize threats to species at risk.

We agree to:

- i) participate in the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council in order to coordinate our activities and resolve issues for the protection of species at risk in Canada;
- ii) recognize the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada as a source of independent advice on the status of species at risk nationally; and,
- iii) establish complementary legislation and programs that provide for effective protection of species at risk throughout Canada, and that will:
 - a. address all native wild species;
 - b. provide an independent process for assessing the status of species at risk;
 - c. legally designate species as threatened or endangered;
 - d. provide immediate legal protection for threatened or endangered species;
 - e. provide protection for the habitat of threatened or endangered species;
 - f. provide for the development of recovery plans within one year for endangered species and two years for threatened species that address the identified threats to the species and its habitat;
 - g. ensure multi-jurisdictional cooperation for the protection of species that cross borders through the development and implementation of recovery plans;
 - h. consider the needs of species at risk as part of environmental assessment processes;
 - i. implement recovery plans in a timely fashion;
 - j. monitor, assess and report regularly on the status of all wild species;

- k. emphasize preventive measures to keep species from becoming at risk;
- l. improve awareness of the needs of species at risk;

- m. encourage citizens to participate in conservation and protection actions;
- n. recognize, foster and support effective and long term stewardship by resource users and managers, landowners, and other citizens; and
- o. provide for effective enforcement.

iv) refer any disputes that may arise under this Accord to the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council for resolution.

Additional guidance on the implementation of this approach is provided in the evolving national framework for the conservation of species at risk.