**Canada Target 1**

**Protected Area/Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measure Assessments**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Compiled by the Pathway to Canada Target 1 National Steering Committee**

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Through the [Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative](https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/home) (Pathway), federal, provincial and territorial governments[[1]](#footnote-1) in Canada are identifying protected and other conserved areas to help document lands that contribute to conservation goals and might count toward the national target[[2]](#footnote-2) of protecting 17% of our terrestrial lands and inland water. The Pathway encourages the evaluation of all potential conserved areas that are contributing to the conservation of Canada’s biodiversity, including privately protected areas, forested and ranching areas that are conserved for the long-term. Areas that are assessed as having the attributes of a protected area or an other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) may be formally recognized as contributing to the conservation of Canada’s biodiversity and to Canada’s area-based conservation target - Canada Target 1.

The following Q&A addresses some of the questions land managers may have:

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## ***Q1. What is Canada Target 1?***

A. In 2010, a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity was adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), an international agreement for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. This plan includes 20 global biodiversity targets, known as the Aichi Targets, to be achieved by 2020.

In response, in 2015 Canada adopted the “2020 Biodiversity Goals and Targets for Canada”. Canada Target 1 (contributing to Aichi target 11) is:

“By 2020, at least 17% of terrestrial areas and inland water, and 10% of marine and coastal areas of Canada are conserved through networks of protected areas[[3]](#footnote-3) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)[[4]](#footnote-4).”

## ***Q2. What are Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs)?***

A. Across Canada, private landowners, Indigenous peoples and municipalities protect and conserve lands for the conservation of nature, recreation, traditional uses, heritage protection, and water supply protection. OECMs are lands that may not have conservation of biodiversity as their primary goal, but are managed in ways that result in the effective and enduring conservation of biodiversity. Recognizing the biodiversity benefits from the way these lands are managed gives us more complete information about our conservation network, which will help us make better land management decisions. For more information regarding OECMs, please refer to the [One with Nature Report](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57e007452e69cf9a7af0a033/t/5c9cd18671c10bc304619547/1553781159734/Pathway-Report-Final-EN.pdf).

## ***Q3. How will lands be evaluated/screened?***

A. Lands are evaluated against a set of criteria derived from existing Protected Areas and OECM definitions as described in the [One with Nature report](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57e007452e69cf9a7af0a033/t/5c9cd18671c10bc304619547/1553781159734/Pathway-Report-Final-EN.pdf). They must have clearly defined boundaries and a management regime that effectively protects biodiversity over the long term. A [standardized evaluation tool](http://twk.pm/baglz3zqmx) has been developed to help categorize the site as a Protected Area, an OECM (Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measure), or neither.Countable areas are being tracked in the [Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)](https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/national-wildlife-areas/protected-conserved-areas-database.html), which includes protected areas as well as OECMs across Canada. For more information or assistance from your province or territory, contacts are available from the [Pathway website](https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/accounting).

It is important to highlight that no obligations for reporting are implied by participating in a pre-screening / screening exercise.

## ***Q4. Who will evaluate/screen lands?***

A. Anyone may evaluate lands. The provincial or territorial government is responsible for reviewing the results and making a decision as to whether sites should be reported to CPCAD. Lands will only be screened if the relevant land owner/manager is interested in doing so. Land managers may be approached by the federal, provincial, or territorial government to see if they are interested in having their lands evaluated. As well, land managers may request the federal, provincial, or territorial government evaluate their land.

## ***Q5. What type of lands can be considered for evaluation/screening through the Decision Support Tool?***

A. Any land managed in ways that effectively conserves biodiversity as a whole for the long term can be screened. Such areas could include municipal parklands, drinking water supply areas, university owned research stations, conservation authority lands, [Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas](https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/ipcas) (IPCAs), set-asides within managed forests, ranch lands that maintain native grassland ecosystems, Indigenous owned land, and privately owned conserved areas.

\*Note, those lands that meet all the screening criteria may be reported and formally recognized as protected areas or OECMs and as contributing to conserving Canada’s biodiversity.

For examples of sites that have been screened, see [Case Studies and Additional Accounting Resources](https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/additional-accounting-resources).

## ***Q6. Why are additional lands being evaluated/screened as possible “Protected Areas” or “Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures”?***

A. Lands that are not typically recognized in government protected area systems also make an important contribution to conserving Canada’s biodiversity. The Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative provides opportunity for a wider scope of land conservation successes to be recognized through inclusion in the [Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)](https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/national-wildlife-areas/protected-conserved-areas-database.html). CPCAD is also used as the source of data for reporting internationally on Canada’s protected and conserved areas network.

Tracking helps us to understand how much biodiversity is being conserved in place and where further efforts may be needed, locally to globally.

## ***Q7. What are the benefits to land owners/managers of evaluating and reporting qualifying lands in CPCAD?***

A. Land owners/managers will be recognized for their conservation practices. They will be contributing officially to provincial, territorial, national and international biodiversity conservation targets and national and international efforts to curb wildlife declines and maintain healthy ecosystems, together with the benefits that they provide. Information is reported to provincial/territorial, national and international databases. This recognition could be beneficial to land owners or managers by contributing to “branding” and reinforcing community values regarding conservation, environmental protection, and sustainable land use, particularly in the context of climate change and global threats to biodiversity.

Along with recognition, some jurisdictions provide financial incentives that may be associated with participation with certain conservation efforts[[5]](#footnote-5). (example: Nova Scotia lands can qualify for municipal tax exemption; research investments; carbon credits, land management funds, etc.)

Lastly, screening provides an opportunity to work with a jurisdiction and to discuss existing and future benefits.

## ***Q8. What are the implications for land owners/managers of evaluating and potentially reporting lands in CPCAD?***

A. Inclusion of lands in the [Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)](https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/national-wildlife-areas/protected-conserved-areas-database.html) is strictly voluntary. In order to include lands in CPCAD, a screening process is undertaken to ensure that the lands meet the Target 1 definition of protected areas or OECMs. The agreement of the land owners/managers should be sought before screening begins. Land owners/managers would participate in the screening process by providing information such as the long-term management intent for the property and any formal conservation mechanisms. CPCAD is published and reporting will establish an expectation that protection will be maintained.

Areas that meet the definitions of a “Protected Area” or an “Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measure” (OECM) may only be counted toward Target 1 with authorization for their inclusion in CPCAD from the land owners/managers or relevant authorities. Land owners/managers are encouraged to consider reporting areas that qualify, providing recognition of their conservation successes.

## ***Q9. Would this new recognition place any new or special restrictions on how we manage our properties? Would we have more restrictive policies than what we currently have?***

A. Once an area is recognized, participating in this reporting does not result in any additional policy or regulatory restrictions for the property. However, to be recognized, all criteria must be met, including that management regimes will ensure that conservation will continue for the long-term.

## ***Q10. What are the implications for land owners/managers if lands are evaluated but do not meet the criteria?***

A. There are no obligations to change the management of the site. The evaluation will identify “gaps” in meeting the criteria. If gaps are addressed, the sites may qualify when re-evaluated. This may assist land managers in their initiatives to increase the effectiveness of their conservation holdings.

## ***Q11. Would this recognition impact or place restrictions on what adjacent landowners can or can’t do on their private property in any way?***

A. No, the assessment and potential resulting recognition apply only to the specific geographic area owned or managed by your organization.

## ***Q12. What level of monitoring and/or reporting would be required to keep the recognition in place?***

A. Allowing an area to be reported to CPCAD as a protected area or OECM does not commit the land owner/manager to any specific monitoring or reporting requirements, however, there must be an expectation that the biodiversity value of the site will be maintained or improved. The Pathway decision support tool and draft guidance on monitoring can be found on the [Pathway website](https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/accounting).

## ***Q13. What site-specific information will be used in the assessment?***

* location and boundaries of the site
* any management plans, including management objectives
* identity of any relevant governing authorities in addition to the land owner/manager and the jurisdiction
* activities occurring and expected to occur on the site
* existing relevant legislation, regulations, bylaws, policy or conservation instruments
* ecological condition of the site

## ***Q14. How will my personal information or information about the site be handled?***

A. [CPCAD](https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/national-wildlife-areas/protected-conserved-areas-database.html) data are published on and are downloadable from the internet as well as visible on an [interactive map](http://indicators-map.canada.ca/App/CESI_ICDE?keys=Conserved_Areas&GoCTemplateCulture=en-CA). Information that is made public includes the boundary of the site (spatial data), as well as a suite of ancillary information, including the site name, date of protection, and managing organization. Private areas may be noted simply as “private” rather than providing the name of a land manager.

Screening and personal information will not be shared without consent from the land manager/owner.

## ***Q15: How do I get my lands counted?***

A. If a land owner/manager is interested in having their lands included in CPCAD or contribute towards provincial/territorial targets, the initial step is to evaluate/screen their lands to see if they qualify. Land owners/managers may wish to screen areas independently or work with jurisdictions to fill information gaps. Information on areas that have been screened can be submitted to the province or territory. Jurisdictions have the final responsibility to validate screenings and to report to CPCAD. For more information on screening, or to request assistance from your province or territory, please reach out to the relevant jurisdictional [contacts](https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/accounting).

1. Québec does not participate in the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative, but contributes to the pan-Canadian effort by achieving an identical target for the creation of protected areas on its territory and its inland water by 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Although provinces and territories have their own land protection and conservation commitments independent from this national target, jurisdictions (with the exception of Quebec) have committed to support progress towards achieving the terrestrial and inland water components of Canada Target 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Protected Area: “A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. OECM: “a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio–economic, and other locally relevant values” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Financial incentives must be applied for through the specific application processes offered by respective jurisdictions separately from this screening and reporting process. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)