

Ecological Framework

Abstract

Fifteen ecozones make up terrestrial Canada, and five make up the marine waters bordering Canada. Canada's 15 terrestrial ecozones can be subdivided into 53 ecoprovinces, which can be further broken into 194 ecoregions. Ecozones are useful for general national reporting and for placing Canada's ecosystem diversity in a North American or global context. Ecoprovinces are useful units at an intermediate scale for national and regional planning and reporting purposes. Ecoregions are a useful ecosystem scale for national, provincial, and regional planning and reporting purposes. Regardless of the level in the hierarchy, each unit is distinguished from others by its unique mosaic of plants, wildlife, climate, landforms, and human activities.

To many Canadians, ecozone names will conjure up distinct images of the country - for example the Prairies, Boreal, Taiga, Arctic and Cordilleran ecozones bring to mind particular features such as mountains, plains, treed and treeless regions, distinct from one another in one or more of their characteristic features.

Canada is comprised of 20 ecozones. Fifteen ecozones make up terrestrial Canada and five make up the marine waters bordering Canada. Ecozones are useful for general national reporting and for placing Canada's ecosystem diversity in a North American or global context. Canada's 15 terrestrial ecozones can be subdivided into 53 ecoprovinces. Ecoprovinces are useful units at an intermediate scale for national and regional planning and reporting purposes. Finally, Canada's 53 terrestrial ecoprovinces can be further broken down into 194 ecoregions. Ecoregions are a useful ecosystem scale for national, provincial and regional planning and reporting purposes. Most maps in this module present the information at the ecoregion level of detail.

Map Sources

Ecological Framework

Marshall, Ian. 1999. Ecosystems of Canada. Ecosystem Stratification Working Group, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada and Environment Canada.

Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)

Federal Government

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Canadian Soil Information System. The National Soil DataBase. Soil Landscapes of Canada.

<http://sis.agr.gc.ca/cansis/nsdb/slc/intro.html>

The Canadian Land Resource Network has created a series of GIS coverages that show the major characteristics of soil and land for the whole country. Soil Landscapes of Canada were compiled at a scale of 1:1 million, and information is organized according to a uniform national set of soil and landscape criteria based on permanent natural attributes.

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

<http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/cgi-bin/PRS/index.cfm>

Search the Federal Environmental Assessment Index

Environment Canada. State of the Environment Infobase

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/soer-ree/>

The State of the Environment (SOE) Infobase was originally developed in 1996 as an interactive and convenient mechanism for presenting a number of environmental reporting products and tools, including The State of Canada's Environment 1996 and Canada's National Environmental Indicators Series 2003.

Environment Canada. State of the Environment Infobase. Ecozones of Canada

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/soer-ree/english/ecozones.cfm>

This site introduces Canada's ecozones and the general concepts of ecological classification.

Provincial/Territorial Government

Government of Manitoba. State of the Environment Report for Manitoba, 1997

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/annual-report/soe-reports/soe97/index.html>

Government of Manitoba. State of the Environment Report for Manitoba, 1997. The Prairie Ecozone : Focus on Sustainable Development

http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/annual-report/soe-reports/soe97/soe97_2.html

Manitoba's prairie ecozone today is an ecosystem reconstructed by human activity. Fertile soils that once sustained vast, mixed grassland and tall-grass prairie now support a three-billion-dollar agriculture industry, one of Manitoba's most vital economic sectors.

Other

Canadian Wildlife Federation

<http://www.cwf-fcf.org/fr/index.html>

CWF is dedicated to fostering awareness and appreciation of our natural world.

