

As the senior governments intensify their involvement in pristine areas systems, there is a need to standardize the approaches used, not just within but also amongst the various jurisdictions in their pristine areas programs. The most important items are discussed below

### 1) Agree to Standardized Pristine Areas Program Goals

If the pristine areas programs of all the senior governments in Canada are to be integrated, common protected areas goals must be agreed to. In that 11 of the 13 senior governments have endorsed the Endangered Spaces Program; i.e. achieving preservation on a representative bio-region basis by the year 2000; such standardization may already have been achieved. Only 2 governments - Quebec and Alberta - have yet to formally endorse this approach although Quebec seems to be also pursuing consistent standards through its protected areas planning.

### 2) Standardize Criteria for Landscape Representation

With protected area planning being structured on the natural regions concept, essentially all jurisdictions have recognized representation as an underlying principle for systems completion. Although criteria for achieving such representation have also been developed by ten jurisdictions (all but N.B., N.S., and Nfld.), they generally lack standardized scientific precision. For example, a number of jurisdictions have simply set a target of designation of one park in each natural region. Unfortunately, without a selection methodology based upon ecological inventory to guide the location, size and configuration of individual candidate sites, there is no way to ensure that pristine areas will capture the full range of biophysical attributes associated with the particular natural regions they are intended to represent.

Clearly, standardization of criteria is critical. Two recent reports from the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas suggest how this might be accomplished: *Framework For Developing a Nation-wide System of Ecological Areas: Part 1 - A Strategy*, and *A First Approximation of Principles and Criteria to Make Canada's Protected Area Systems Representative of the Nation's Ecological Diversity*. They recommend that representation be based on "enduring features of the environment..., relatively stable landforms and seaforms and their accompanying plant and animal communities", and that some form of "gap analysis" (determination of inadequacy or "gaps" in representation) should be employed in planning system expansion.

(Gap analysis typically involves two levels of assessment: the "coarse-filter" looks at protection needs to represent ecological zones, subzones and landscapes, while the "fine filter" addresses specific biological features such as forest site associations and age classes or significant wildlife populations.)