Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992. Under the convention, Canada's federal, provincial, and territorial governments worked together to develop the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy, released in 1995, which includes many agricultural objectives. Agriculture benefits from biodiversity in many ways, but it has also reduced biodiversity over the years, mainly through the conversion of natural habitats, but also through effects on soil and water quality and the loss of old varieties of plants and domestic animals.

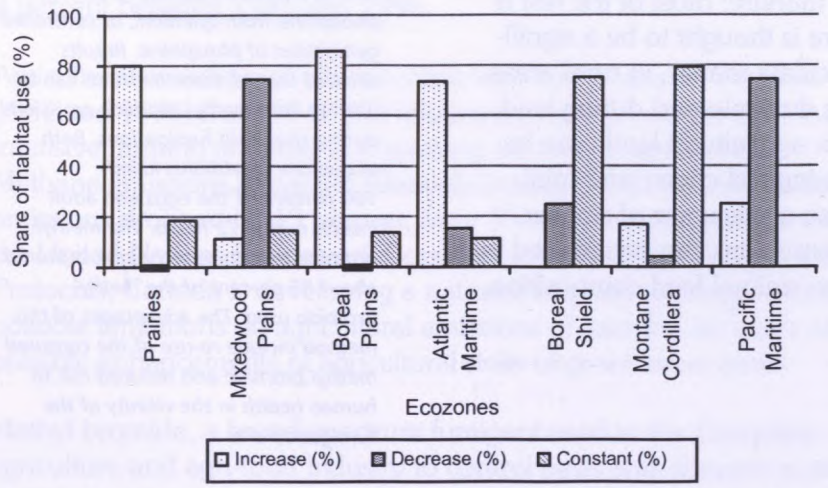
To remedy this situation, many projects are under way on Canadian farmland to conserve and restore wetlands and riparian habitat; to protect endangered wild species (such as the swift fox and the wood poppy) and to support species recovery; to conserve endangered domestic livestock breeds and plant varieties; and to improve soil and water quality as they are affected by agriculture. These activities are helping to meet two of the agricultural goals of the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy — to maintain the agricultural resource base and to promote sustainable farming practices that are compatible with wildlife.

An indicator of the availability of wildlife habitat on farmland shows a positive or neutral trend in all ecozones in which agriculture is practised except the Pacific Maritime (in British Columbia) and Mixedwood Plains (in Ontario and Quebec), mainly as a result of the intensity of agriculture in these areas. The Government of Canada has committed to introducing legislation aimed at recovering species at

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan

Canada and the United States (1986) and later Mexico (1994) signed the North American Waterfowl Management Plan to restore declining waterfowl populations in North America to 1970s levels. In Canada, the plan focuses on conserving and restoring wetland and upland habitats for waterfowl, particularly in the Prairies, which provide breeding habitat for almost 40 percent of the continent's duck population. A landscape approach is taken and agreements are made with farmers and other landowners to modify their land use and land management practices for the benefit of both their operations and wildlife. Ten years into the program, dabbling duck populations had nearly reached the 1970s average, though much work remained for other species. Landowners and the general public are positive about wetland and waterfowl conservation, and communities benefit through jobs and greater tourism opportunities associated with the plan. The plan is now being broadened to include other migratory bird initiatives, expand partnerships, strengthen science, and work at a broader landscape level.

Share of habitat-use units for which agricultural habitat area in Canada increased, decreased, or remained constant between 1981 and 1996



Note: A habitat-use unit is a single use of a habitat by a wildlife species, such as mallard feeding, mallard loafing, or mallard nesting.