

PROGRESS TO DATE

a) Terrestrial National Parks

Currently, 23 of federally identified terrestrial natural regions are represented by the 35 national parks and park reserves. The most recent of these was established on August 7, 1992 when the Minister of Environment, Hon. Jean Charest, signed an agreement for a new national park on Banks Island.

This leaves 16 terrestrial natural regions (or 44% of total) which have yet to be represented with protected areas. The unrepresented regions occur in the Northwest Territories, Quebec, Labrador, Manitoba, British Columbia and the Yukon.

b) National Marine Parks

Subsequent to the development of the national parks terrestrial natural regions system, the recognition developed for the need to also achieve systems protection for the variety of marine environments found in Canada waters. Here the focus is representative protection of underwater bioregions.

By comparison with the terrestrial national parks, the national marine park system is in its infancy. Nevertheless, it is the intention the Canadian Parks Service to establish a national marine park in each of the 29 marine regions of Canada over the long-term. Currently, just two marine regions are adequately represented (Fathom Five National Marine Park in Ontario and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve Marine Component in British Columbia). Once agreements for new marine parks at South Moresby (British Columbia) and Saguenay (Quebec) are fully implemented, three further regions will be represented. After that there will still be 24 marine regions to represent. While the Green Plan has committed the federal government to protect a further four marine regions by 2000, still almost $\frac{2}{3}$'s (20) of Canada's marine environments will have no representative protection. Therefore this falls significantly short of the goal of achieving systems' completion by that target date.

Given the level of disturbance associated with the extensively developed fishing and shell fish industries, as well as other subsurface sectors such as energy exploration/development, the options to protect intact samples of marine landscapes are diminishing rapidly, especially in southern Canada. This being the case, a strong argument can be made to hasten the program to complete the national marine parks system beyond the presently established schedule.