c) Territorial Responsibilities.

The federal government retains much of the responsibility for lands and natural resources administration in the Yukon and Northwest Territories (although these powers are slowly devolving as the roles of the territorial governments increases). This enables a less complicated establishment of national parks here, a key reason why much of the expansion of the national parks system has been focused on the territories in recent years.

d) Aboriginal Responsibilities

Responsibility for aboriginal affairs is constitutionally assigned to the federal government. Especially in this era of land claims negotiations, the federal government can have a role to play in the establishment of pristine areas, particularly in the Territories. It has exercised this mandate recently in the negotiation of the Canada-Haida agreement related to South Moresby National Park Reserve and also in the Nunavit Land Claim resolution process in the eastern Arctic.

Given the foregoing range of responsibilities, federal involvement in pristine areas is major. For this reason, the federal government through its Canadian Parks Service was the first government to understand the need for taking a representative landscapes systems completion approach to pristine areas acquisition. This agency continues to play a leadership role in this area. Not surprisingly, the accomplishments of the Canadian National Parks system are recognized across our country as well as internationally.

The following section provides details of the progress being made on pristine areas by the federal government.

CANADIAN INVOLVEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL PRISTINE AREAS AGENDA

For many years Canada has been very involved internationally in promoting the preservation of nature. For example, Canada recently joined other nations in calling for immediate action on establishing a global network of pristine areas. Participants of the Fourth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas, held in Caracas, Venezuela in February 1992, adopted a declaration which read in part: