

The **Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands** region, consisting of the southernmost part of Canada, is a tiny area but home to more than half of Canada's population. It contains nearly all of the population of Ontario and most of that of Quebec. This region corresponds to a single ecozone: the Mixedwood Plains.

The region has the best climate for agriculture in Canada and a substantial area of good farmland. Consequently, it vies with the Prairies as Canada's leading agricultural producer. The nature of the agriculture, however, is much different. Because of the large local population, most of the produce from the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands is consumed locally, with the result that its agriculture is dominated by dairy and livestock rather than by grains. The Prairies mainly produce for export.

The main basis of the region's economy, however, is manufacturing and the service industries. Canada's two largest urban areas, Toronto and Montreal, are both found in this region, and there are many other large manufacturing centres, as well as other large cities, such as the national capital, Ottawa. The region has always produced the majority of Canada's manufacturing output, and this is likely to remain the case as it is located adjacent to the industrial heartland of the United States.

The **Arctic** region consists of three ecozones: the Southern Arctic, the Northern Arctic, and the Arctic Cordillera. The underlying geology is extremely varied, with more than half the area being underlain by the Canadian Shield. The common aspect of the region is that it is entirely north of the tree line.

This region lies mainly in Nunavut, but much of it is also in the Northwest Territories and parts are in the northernmost areas of Quebec and Newfoundland. The population is small (only about 50 000) and is unusual in that nearly all of it is Aboriginal, predominantly Inuit. These people have lived in the area for thousands of years, primarily exploiting sea resources. Much more recently, substantial new mineral and energy resources have become important and, in some cases, developed. Some of the most recent developments are for Canada's newest mineral product, diamonds.

THE EARTH SCIENCES

The earth sciences consist of two broad fields: geoscience and geomatics. Focused on the objective of characterizing the nature of the earth and understanding how the earth works, geoscience includes aspects of the scientific disciplines of chemistry, physics, and biology. It is the science of understanding the earth's crust, its components, and

A Vibrant Technology Sector

Canada has earned recognition as a world leader in the field of geomatics — one of the fastest growing technology sectors over the last decade. The Canadian geomatics community provides software, hardware, and value-added services to help clients resolve problems and seize opportunities in areas such as the earth sciences, infrastructure management, the environment, land management and reform, natural-resource monitoring and development, development planning, and coastal-zone management and mapping.