

and well-being of Arctic children and youth, managing regional fisheries, assessing prospects for expanded use of telemedicine on a circumpolar basis, promoting cultural and ecotourism, and improving rural sanitation systems.

Canada is also promoting an ecosystem approach to all its transboundary living marine resources. It pursues this approach through the scientific and management groups in international organizations of the marine nations such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, and the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission.

The United States is an important partner in the Great Lakes Ecosystem Initiative and in work related to the ecosystem of the Georgia Basin–Puget Sound region where the path of migratory birds, watersheds, and the airshed are shared in parts of the state of Washington and the province of British Columbia. Transboundary pollution is the focus of the 1991 Canada–United States Air Quality Agreement. The two governments have jointly made significant reductions in emissions of the two major acid rain pollutants — sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. There is also increasing cooperation in addressing the emerging issues of ground-level ozone and particulate matter.

In a global context, Canada is applying the ecosystem approach in meeting its commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The convention increased the profile of the need to conserve species, genetic resources, and ecosystems, and to ensure that the use of these resources and ecosystems is sustainable. Canada was the first industrialized country to ratify the convention and since December 1992 has prepared a detailed strategy for its implementation. This international environmental agreement is the first global treaty to highlight the importance of the whole ecosystem. It drew attention to the importance of biodiversity (the genetic diversity within species, diversity among species, and diversity of ecosystems) for the provision of food and medicines and other life-support systems; the losses of biodiversity due largely to the destruction, degradation, and fragmentation of habitat and ecosystems; and the need to expand efforts from the conservation of individual species to the conservation and sustainable use of a wide range of biodiversity, including genetic diversity within species and the diversity of ecosystems.

To facilitate the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, a number of global biodiversity information networks have emerged, including the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) established

Conserving Ducks, Geese, and Swans on a Continental Scale

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan seeks to restore waterfowl populations in Canada, the United States, and Mexico to the levels recorded during the 1970s — a benchmark decade for waterfowl populations. Between 1986 and 1997, plan partners invested over US\$1.5 billion to secure, protect, restore, enhance, and manage wetlands and associated uplands in priority landscapes; to conduct research and monitor specific waterfowl populations; and to provide environmental education and conservation planning with community involvement.

Canada's Response to the Convention on Biological Diversity

In Canada, the commitments of the Convention on Biological Diversity are being implemented through national, provincial, and community biodiversity strategies. The Canadian Biodiversity Strategy promotes the development and implementation of ecological management, which it defines as "the management of human activities so that ecosystems, their structure, functions, composition and the physical, chemical and biological processes that shape them, continue at appropriate temporal and spatial scales".