

participants involved in the tri-council meeting. The Committee believes these initiatives are an effective method to meet the goal of the designation of 12% of Canada's territory, ensuring that all of Canada's eco-regions are represented, and to meet the related obligations under the *Convention on Biological Diversity*.

Recommendation No. 11

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada, in cooperation with all levels of government, support the implementation of the five initiatives identified for action at the tri-council meeting:

- 1. complete networks of protected areas representative of Canada's land-based natural regions by the year 2000 and accelerate the protection of areas representative of Canada's marine natural regions;**
- 2. accelerate the identification and protection of critical wildlife habitat;**
- 3. adopt frameworks, strategies and time frames for the completion of protected areas networks;**
- 4. continue to cooperate in the protection of ecosystems, landscapes, and wildlife habitat;**
- 5. ensure that protected areas are integral components of all sustainable development strategies.**

D. Legislative Initiatives

Witnesses before the Committee largely agreed that Canada was able, without passing new legislation, to ratify the *Convention on Biological Diversity*. However, it was also agreed that legislation may be desirable or even necessary in order for Canada to honour its obligations under the Convention in the future. Elizabeth May, of the Sierra Club of Canada, said that while Canada did not need legislation to be competent to ratify the Convention:

We would certainly be in violation of the Convention, I believe, if we did not move quickly to article 8(k), which is the commitment that we develop the necessary legislation for the protection of threatened species and populations. In other words, we are not required, in order to implement this convention, to have such legislation in place. We are committed to developing it, and that's why I think this committee should recommend, out of this series of hearings you're having, that we move quickly to develop endangered species legislation.⁴⁵

Article 8(k) of the Convention requires countries to develop or maintain the necessary legislation for the protection of threatened species or populations.

One of Canada's legislative gaps, as identified by witnesses before this Committee, is that of federal legislation to protect endangered species. The problem of conserving biological diversity is much broader, of course, than the protection of individual species, but the endangerment of species is a signal of a threat to biodiversity. As Stewart Elgie of the Sierra Legal Defence Fund

⁴⁵ Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of the Standing Committee on Environment, Issue No. 47, 23 November 1992, p. 38.