

IMPLEMENTING CONNECTIVITY CONSERVATION IN CANADA



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For the first time in the Canadian context, this report addresses multiple aspects associated with implementing connectivity conservation, including sample governance models, legislative and policy contexts, the results of a pan-Canadian organizational capacity and needs assessment survey, and ten case studies of connectivity conservation in practice.

It is the hope of the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas (CCEA), the report editors, and more than 20 authors from across Canada that this report will stimulate discussion and provide guidance for implementation of connectivity conservation in Canada, and beyond, to achieve the goals of the *Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework* and the *2050 Vision for Biodiversity*.

PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS REPORT

1

Mainstream connectivity conservation by adapting the legislative, regulatory, and policy landscape to elevate its consideration in decision-making.

3

Foster collaboration among connectivity conservation promoters and influencers.

2

Prioritize funding on-the-ground projects to retain and restore connectivity conservation undertaken by a broad spectrum of traditional & new promoters & influencers.

4

Invest in social & natural science research to build the evidence-base required for effective implementation of connectivity conservation during all stages of management planning.

POLICY MAINSTREAMING

Barriers:

- Many organizations and jurisdictions lack policy, legislation, & direction specifically for connectivity conservation.
- There is a lack of incentives or political pressure to develop & implement connectivity policy.

Recommendations:

- Infrastructure funding programs require negative impacts to connectivity be prevented & mitigated, with the costs of doing so built into project proposals.
- Laws & policies for environmental/impact assessments (EA/IA) are updated to ensure that development activities that may negatively impact connectivity are subject to an EA/IA.

PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

Barriers:

- Inability to move from identification of key connectivity areas to protection or restoration.
- Fed/prov/terr agencies encounter significant challenges working with other departments within and beyond their own governments on connectivity conservation.

Recommendations:

- Fed/prov/terr laws & policies are established/updated to formally designate & conserve ecological networks & corridors.
- Prov/terr agencies should establish/update financial programs for Crown lands & financial incentives for non-Crown lands to conserve areas important for connectivity. connectivity are subject to an EA/IA.

COLLABORATION & ENGAGEMENT

Barriers:

- Existing collaborative efforts have been largely ad-hoc & informal.
- Collaboration involving partners with significantly different mandates than those of the 'usual partners' responsible for protected areas, has been difficult.

Recommendations:

- Establish a national connectivity strategy & partnership.
- Establish 'regional transboundary conservation cooperatives' (RTCCs) throughout Canada to help coordinate cross-boundary & inter-agency conservation efforts.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & EXCHANGE

Barriers:

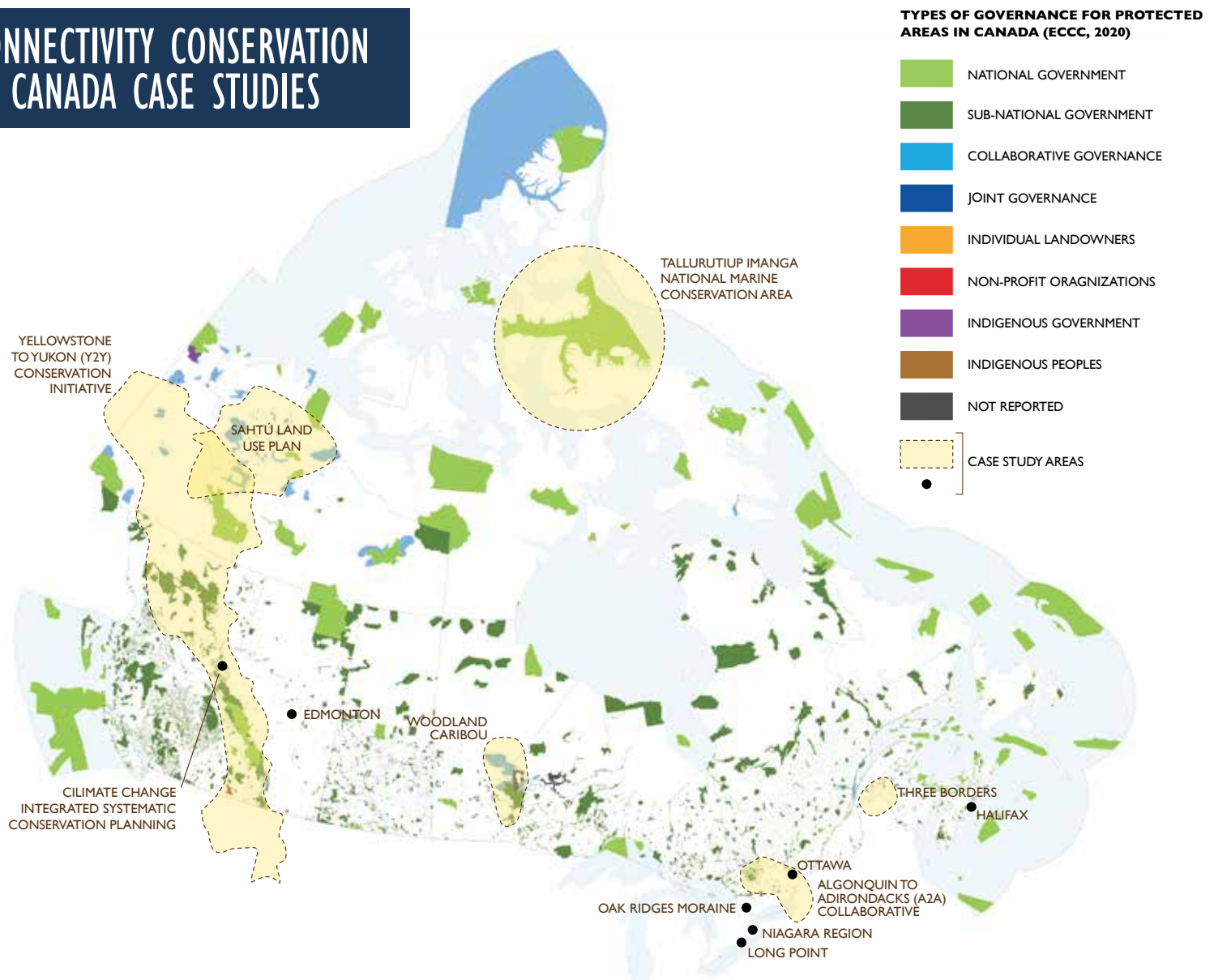
- Training opportunities are limited & perceived not worthwhile if there is no ability to implement it.
- Investments in natural science & other forms of knowledge do not translate into decision-making.

Recommendations:

- Invest in research and other forms of knowledge and associated knowledge mobilization activities to support the effective implementation of connectivity conservation during all stages of management planning, including monitoring & evaluation.

There is a critical need for evidence-based connectivity conservation to become more effectively mainstreamed into legislation & policy in Canada. This includes both providing incentives to retain and restore connectivity where possible and implementing disincentives for activities that degrade or ignore connectivity in decision-making processes.

CONNECTIVITY CONSERVATION IN CANADA CASE STUDIES



CONTENTS OF THE 2021 CCEA REPORT

This report fuses a literature review, case studies, and an organizational capacity and needs assessment survey of connectivity practitioners and stakeholders to identify gaps, barriers, successes, and solutions to maintain and restore connectivity in Canada. The contents of the report include:

- Chapter 1:** The Need for a (Re)Connected Canada
- Chapter 2:** Governance, Law and Policy Dimensions of Connectivity Conservation in Canada
- Chapter 3:** Case Studies on Connectivity Conservation in Canada
- Chapter 4:** Connectivity Conservation in Canada Organizational Capacity and Needs Assessment
- Chapter 5:** (Re)Connecting Canada: Setting the Table for Transformation

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