

WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE ALLOWED OR PROHIBITED?



Generally speaking, most recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and free movement are allowed. Moreover, existing infrastructure such as vacation resort buildings, are maintained in biodiversity reserves. Similarly, existing structured wildlife territories such as controlled harvesting zones (ZECs) and wildlife reserves can maintain the management of access to the territory. On the other hand, industrial activities such as forestry, mineral, oil, and gas exploration and exploitation, the use of hydraulic power, or any commercial or industrial energy production are prohibited there.

The following table summarizes the activities that are usually allowed or prohibited pursuant to the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (CQLR, c. C-61.01), a regulation, or the conservation plan of each reserve.

Table 1:
Main activities usually allowed or prohibited in biodiversity reserves*

Activity	Allowed/prohibited
Industrial forest development	⊗ Prohibited
Mineral, gas, and oil exploration and exploitation	⊗ Prohibited
Use of hydraulic power	⊗ Prohibited
Any commercial or industrial energy production	⊗ Prohibited
Hunting	☑ Permitted
Fishing	☑ Permitted
Trapping	☑ Permitted
Access by and movement of motor vehicles such as quads, snowmobiles, and motor boats	☑ Permitted
Construction of new infrastructure such as buildings, roads, and trails	⊗ Prohibited**
Attribution of new land rights for personal use such as holidaying, and basic shelters	⊗ Prohibited**
Non-mechanized gathering of non-timber forest products such as small fruits and mushrooms	☑ Permitted
Firewood harvesting for basic shelters or trapping camps	☑ Permitted
Firewood harvesting by other users of the territory	⊗ Prohibited**
Research and education	☑ Permitted
Ongoing activities of controlled harvesting zones (ZECs), outfitting operations, and wildlife reserves	☑ Permitted
Stocking	⊗ Prohibited**
Hiking and recreation such as walking, cycling, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing	☑ Permitted

* This list must not under any circumstances replace the legal texts, i.e., the Natural Heritage Conservation Act and the conservation plan of each reserve.

** Except if the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks has given his authorization.



Management of the biodiversity reserves

The MELCCFP is responsible for the administration of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act. To promote the sound management and the harmonization of uses in the territory, partnerships with local stakeholders are sought to implement conservation and promotion measures.

Activities regulated by other legislation

Certain activities likely to be carried on in a biodiversity reserve are governed by other legislative or regulatory provisions and some require the issuing of a permit or an authorization or the payment of fees. Certain activities may also be prohibited or limited pursuant to other statutes or regulations applicable to the territory of the reserve. Before engaging in an activity or carrying out an intervention that requires an authorization in the territory of a biodiversity reserve, you must complete the [Formulaire de demande d'autorisation pour les activités réalisées dans une réserve de biodiversité](#) and submit the request through the [Formulaire de demande de renseignements](#) available on the Québec government website.

To obtain the list of Québec biodiversity reserves and consult their conservation plans, please visit the MELCCFP website.



Biodiversity reserves

www.environnement.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversite/reserves-bio/

Environnement,
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WHAT PURPOSE DO THEY SERVE?



The Québec government created biodiversity reserves, which are areas that protect natural environments and their biodiversity (fauna and flora). The reserves contribute to the representativeness of the network of protected areas since they seek to protect a characteristic sample of Québec's natural environments and their biodiversity.

When the protected areas are established, the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP) is receptive to the needs of regional stakeholders and seeks to respond to the utmost to the aspirations of local populations.

The protected areas are one of the tools geared to achieving by 2030 the target of preserving 30% of Québec's territory. This target stems from the commitment made at the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) held in December 2022 in Montréal and is in keeping with the targets adopted by the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

WHICH NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS ARE PROTECTED?

Samples of all types of ecosystems, even the most common ones, and all facets of the natural environment warrant protection to ensure the representativeness of Québec's network of protected areas. For this reason, the biodiversity reserves do not necessarily target the protection of rare facets or outstanding ecosystems although protected area status can be used for this purpose.



VARIANTS ARE POSSIBLE DEPENDING ON THE TERRITORIES

To consider the specific ecological or social characteristics of each territory, the regime of activities allowed in a biodiversity reserve can be adapted. For example, special zoning can be established in part of the reserve to limit activities in especially fragile sectors. Conversely, certain promotional activities can be stipulated in zones with tourism potential.

