

ECOSYSTEM

EFFECTIVENESS

NATURALNESS



Overview of Québec's protected areas network

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN BRIEF - 2009



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Southern zone

IN 2009



Protected areas constituted 4.8% of the zone in 2009. Mountain ecosystems and the *coniferous* cover are relatively well represented in the network of protected areas, while the *broadleaf* cover is less well represented. The protection rate of the *wetland* cover has seen a clear increase in the basses-terres du Saint-Laurent (Saint-Lawrence Lowlands), but remains low in Appalaches (Appalachian Mountains), where this cover type is rare. The network of protected areas is over 2 times less affected by human encroachment than the overall territory of reference. The factor of connectivity between protected areas is often low. Conservation cores are generally smaller than 100 km². The zone has a high concentration of endangered or vulnerable species hotspots, including that of woodland caribou in the Chic-Chocs.

Marine zone and Anticosti Island



IN 2009

Protected areas constituted 3.1% of this zone in 2009. The Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park is the only area that offers a possible contribution to the representativeness of the estuarine environment. Shortcomings in the marine ecosystems of the protected areas network are found throughout the Gulf of St. Lawrence. As far as the Anticosti Island is concerned, natural habitats are well represented at its center. The parc national d'Anticosti offers a conservation core of 102 km² for a total surface area of 572 km². Conservation strategies regarding the island must take into consideration the impact of the white-tailed deer on biodiversity.

Central zone

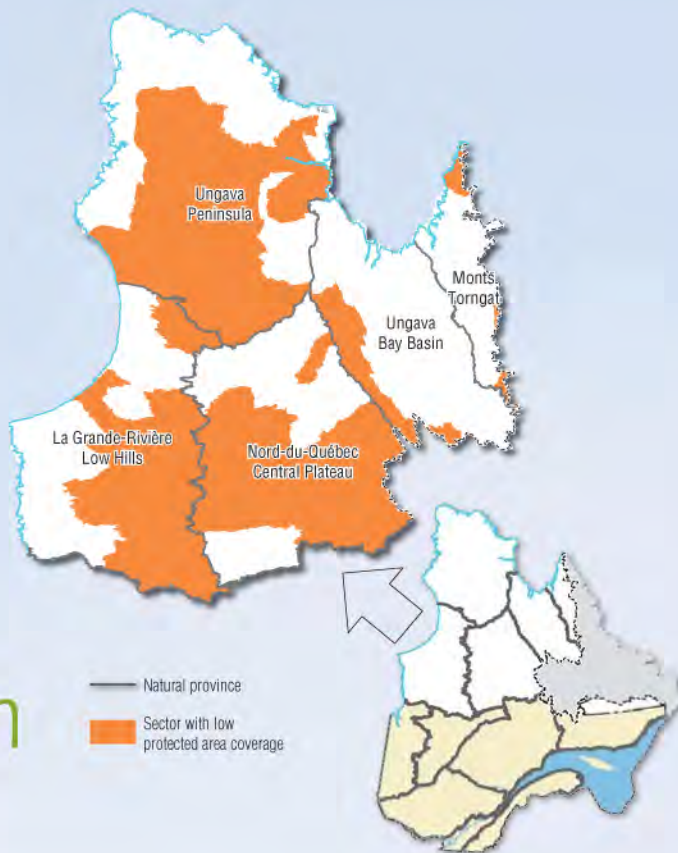
IN 2009



Protected areas constituted 8.1% of this zone in 2009. The natural environments in the vicinity of the northern boundary of exploited forest are well represented in the network. Many protected areas are associated with cover types resulting from human disturbances and unproductive forest environments. The analysed endangered or vulnerable species are relatively well represented; 5 protected areas overlap the dense networks of woodland caribou trails in the inventory area. There exist several conservation cores with surface areas exceeding or equal to 1 000 km² with generally high indexes of connectivity between protected areas.

Northern zone

IN 2009

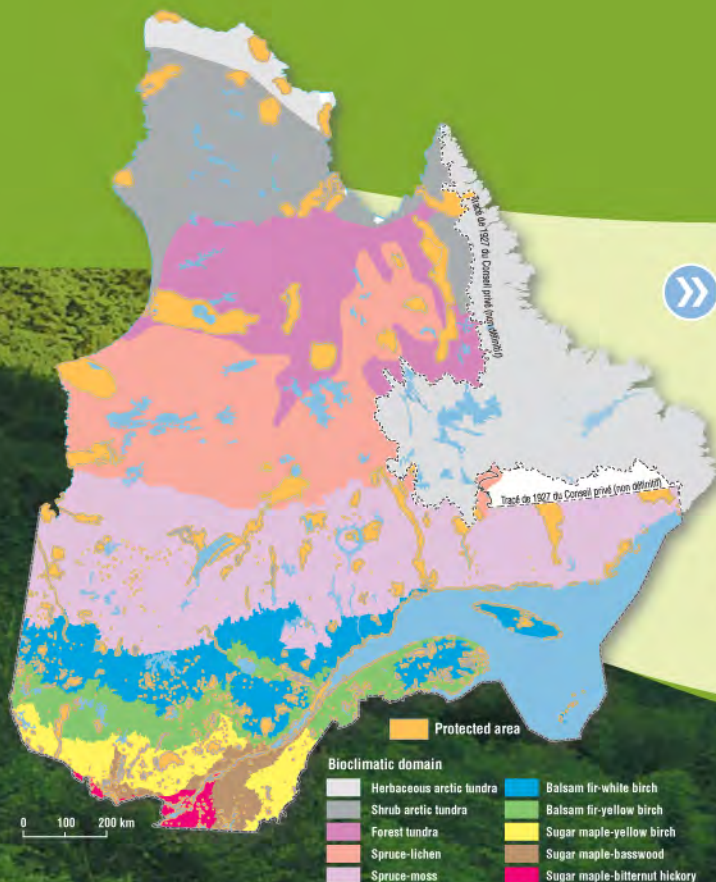


Protected areas constituted 9.9% of this zone in 2009, and the area now has the largest conservation cores of Québec, with a core of over 10 000 km². The natural coastal environments are particularly well represented in the network of protected areas while the ecosystems at the centre of the natural provinces are less so. Shortcomings are observed for *shrubs*, *water*, *coniferous* and *mirwood* covers in the protected areas of the péninsule d'Ungava province. The protected areas in the province naturelle des Monts Torngat (natural province of the Torngat Mountains) are characterised by a great number of occurrences of endangered or vulnerable species. The protected areas of the plateau central du Nord-du-Québec (Nord-du-Québec Central Plateau natural province) do not yet capture any known occurrences of endangered or vulnerable species. The connectivity index between the protected areas in this zone is generally medium, which can be attributed to the distances between the protected areas.



BIOCLIMATIC DOMAINS

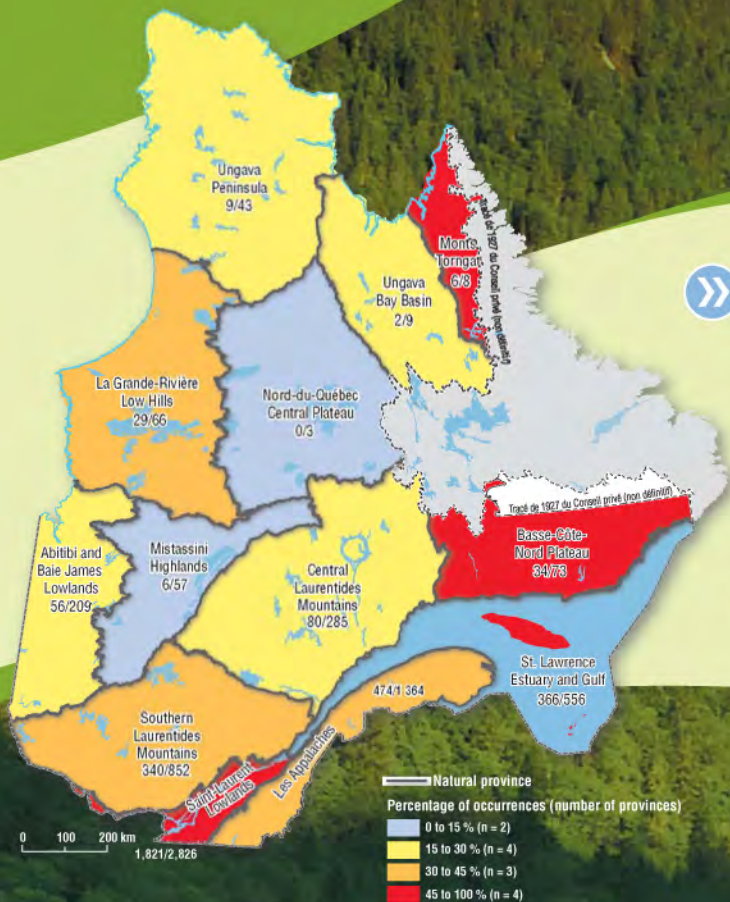
The herbaceous arctic tundra (14.05%), forest tundra (14.40%) and spruce-moss (8.84%) bioclimatic domains are the best represented within the protected areas network in 2009, while the sugar maple-basswood (3.43%), balsam fir-white birch (5.35%) and balsam fir-yellow birch (5.45%) domains are less well represented in the network.



Développement durable,
Environnement
et Parcs

Québec





» ENDANGERED OR VULNERABLE SPECIES (EMV)

Over 80% of analyzed endangered or vulnerable species (EMV) have at least one occurrence in the protected areas network in 2009, which represents two thirds of all endangered or vulnerable species. Seventy EMVs protected under the Act Respecting Threatened or Vulnerable Species are excluded from the present network and preserved in some other manner.



CONSERVATION CORES

The number of protected areas with surface areas between 1 000 km² and 10 000 km² increased nine-fold in the last seven years. This represents a surface class in which the protected areas are most efficient with respect to conservation cores, with a contribution rate of 70%.



CONNECTIVITY

In 2009, the network of protected areas had a medium to high connectivity ratio in the majority of the territory. Some areas had connectivity ratios ranging from medium to low, resulting from a considerable human presence or large distances between protected areas.



PROPOSED PROTECTED AREAS

Between 2002 and 2009, the ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs (MDDEP) received 766 proposals for protected areas throughout the province of Québec. These proposals concern almost 278 892 km², or 16.7% of Québec's territory. By comparing the proposals to the existing network, we discover that 23% of the protected area network of 2009 overlaps with the suggestions from the public and community players.