

Canada's Forests

Sustainability indicators

Status of forest-associated species at risk

Context

A change in status of a species at risk is a consideration in assessing the species recovery strategy.

In Canada, the [Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada](#) (COSEWIC) identifies the wild species that are in some danger of disappearing.

Status

Of the 51 species assessed or reassessed by COSEWIC in April 2010, 7 are forest-associated. Of these, 5 were reassessed at the same at-risk level, and 2 were newly assessed as being at risk. No species were reassessed in a lower-risk category.

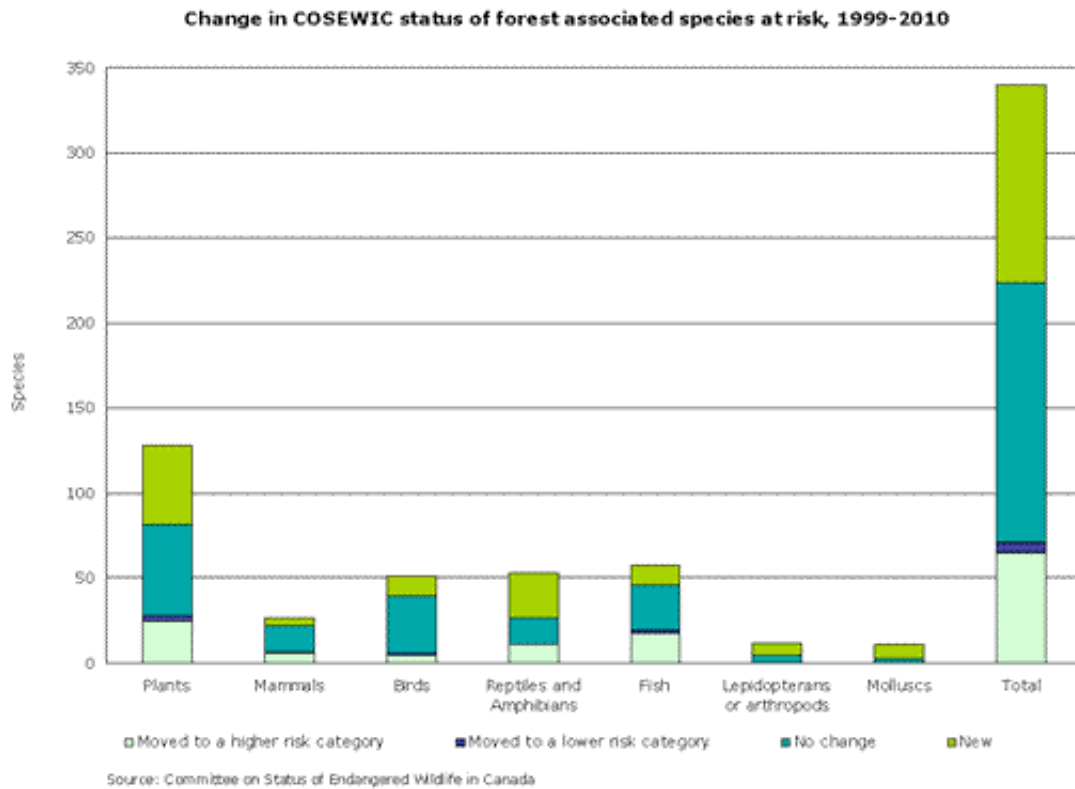
Canada now has 340 forest-associated species at risk, representing 55% of the COSEWIC-listed species. Of these

- 10 (3%) are extirpated
- 146 (43%) are endangered
- 87 (26%) are threatened
- 97 (29%) are of special concern

Since 1999

- 65 (19%) of forest-associated species at risk have moved to a higher risk category
- 6 (2%) have been moved to a lower category
- 152 (45%) remain the same
- 117 (34%) are newly assessed species

COSEWIC "at risk" categories	
Extirpated	no longer exists in the wild in Canada but occurs elsewhere
Endangered	faces imminent extirpation or extinction
Threatened	likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed
Special concern	may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats



However, it is important to note that when COSEWIC changes a species' category to a higher or lower level, it does not necessarily mean that the species' situation has improved or deteriorated. It may instead be the result of new information.

Influencing factors

Habitat loss and degradation remain the primary concerns for forest-associated species at risk. However, climate change is an increasingly prominent risk factor for many forest species. Other threats reported in COSEWIC's 2010 assessment include predation, competition and invasive alien species.

Outlook

In the short- to medium-term, the primary threats to biodiversity are habitat degradation and fragmentation and invasive alien species. However, the effects of climate change may outweigh those of other threats in the long term. Climate change is likely to have the largest impact on northern, alpine, and boreal ecosystems where its effects are already being observed.

Last Modified: 2010-09-30