

Reports of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to the Parliament of Canada

# Report 9

## Departmental Progress in Implementing Sustainable Development Strategies— Species at Risk



**Independent Auditor's  
Report | 2022**



Office of the  
Auditor General  
of Canada

Bureau du  
vérificateur général  
du Canada

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# Introduction

## Background

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### Federal and departmental sustainable development strategies

9.1 Under the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*, the Government of Canada is required to develop a federal sustainable development strategy at least every 3 years. The strategy outlines the government's plan and vision for a more sustainable Canada over the 3-year period, setting a high bar for transparency, reporting, and oversight. It further establishes government-wide environmental and sustainable development goals, targets, and contributing actions.

9.2 In addition, the act requires certain organizations (Appendix) to

- prepare their own sustainable development strategies that contain objectives and plans
- ensure that these strategies comply with the federal strategy and contribute to meeting its goals
- report on progress in implementing their sustainable development strategies at least once in each of the 2 years following the tabling of their strategies

9.3 The federal strategy subject to this audit covers the period from 2019 to 2022. Twenty-seven federal organizations were required to table sustainable development strategies to contribute to the federal strategy ([Exhibit 9.1](#)).

**Exhibit 9.1—The 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and expectations for contributions by departmental strategies**

<b>2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy</b>	
<b>Federal goals</b>	<p>The 13 federal goals in the strategy are long-term aspirational results that reflect the Government of Canada’s priorities for sustainable development.</p> <p>For example, the goal of Healthy Wildlife Populations, which we examined in this audit, focuses on the protection and recovery of wildlife populations and habitats:</p> <p>Healthy Wildlife Populations—long-term goal: “All species have healthy and viable populations.”</p>
<b>Federal targets</b>	<p>The federal strategy contains a total of 32 targets, which are medium-term objectives that contribute to reaching the 13 federal goals. Each goal needs to have at least 1 target, and each target needs to have at least 1 indicator to track progress.</p> <p>For example, there are 2 targets under the goal of Healthy Wildlife Populations. One of these relates to migratory birds. The other relates to species at risk, the focus of this audit:</p> <p>Species at risk—medium-term target: “By 2020, species that are secure remain secure, and populations of species at risk listed under federal law exhibit trends that are consistent with recovery strategies and management plans.”</p>
<b>Federal contributing actions</b>	<p>There are also some 67 contributing actions in the federal strategy that set out what the federal government will do to achieve the federal goals and targets.</p> <p>For example, the federal strategy contains 7 contributing actions under the goal of Healthy Wildlife Populations.</p>
<b>2020–2023 departmental sustainable development strategies</b>	
<b>Departmental actions</b>	<p>Federal organizations have to develop their own departmental sustainable development strategies, which articulate their contributions to the federal strategy. Departmental actions in departmental strategies are concrete activities with objectives that individual organizations undertake to help achieve the federal goals, targets, and contributing actions.</p> <p>For example, in their departmental strategies, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada together identified a total of 15 actions that would contribute to meeting the species at risk target under the goal of Healthy Wildlife Populations.</p>

9.4 Under the *Auditor General Act*, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development monitors and reports on the progress of designated entities toward sustainable development, which is a continually evolving concept that integrates social, economic, and environmental concerns. In addition, the Commissioner has a duty to monitor and report on progress made by federal organizations that are

subject to the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*. In particular, the Commissioner monitors and reports on

- the extent to which these organizations have contributed to meeting the targets in the federal strategy
- how well these organizations have met the objectives and implemented the plans in their departmental strategies

9.5 This audit is our first report on the contribution of federal organizations under the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy reporting cycle. This year’s report on departmental progress in implementing sustainable development strategies focuses on the species at risk target under the federal strategy goal of Healthy Wildlife Populations (Exhibit 9.1). Three federal organizations are responsible for preparing departmental sustainable development strategies with actions that contribute to meeting this goal and target and for reporting on their progress:

- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Parks Canada

9.6 Healthy wildlife populations are a crucial part of Canada’s biodiversity. About 80,000 species are estimated to exist in Canada. However, certain wild species face a variety of threats, including habitat loss and degradation, invasive alien species, pollution, overexploitation, and climate change. Consequently, some of these species could face population decline. As of March 2021, there were 622 species listed as at risk under Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*, the official federal list of wildlife species at risk that are provided with legal protection under the act.

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**Responsibilities of  
the 3 organizations  
related to the *Species at  
Risk Act***

9.7 The *Species at Risk Act* provides for the legal protection of wildlife species listed under the act as extirpated (no longer existing in the wild in Canada), endangered, or threatened and of their critical habitat (that is, habitat identified as necessary for their survival or recovery). In particular, the act is intended to

- prevent wildlife species from being extirpated or becoming extinct
- provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered, or threatened as a result of human activity
- manage species of special concern to prevent them from becoming endangered or threatened

9.8 Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada share responsibility for the implementation of the act, as follows:

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada is responsible for the protection and recovery of listed aquatic species at risk other than species administered by Parks Canada.
- Parks Canada is responsible for protecting individuals of listed species located in or on federal lands and waters administered by the agency and leading the recovery of listed species whose populations are wholly or almost wholly found in these Parks Canada-administered places. Parks Canada contributes to the recovery of all other listed species that occur there.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada has the lead responsibility for administration of the act. It is responsible for the protection and recovery of all listed terrestrial species at risk on federal lands (other than those on Parks Canada's land) and on non-federal lands. It is also responsible for the protection of migratory birds anywhere they are found in Canada.

## Focus of the audit

9.9 This audit focused on whether Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada contributed to meeting both the species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and the related United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land, as applicable to each entity. In particular, we assessed

- each organization's performance as it relates to the quality of departmental actions set out in its 2020–2023 departmental sustainable development strategy and its performance measures
- the implementation of these departmental actions
- the 2020–21 reporting to track progress on these departmental actions' contributions to the species at risk target.

9.10 We did not audit

- the implementation of *Species at Risk Act* or program controls (such as whether plans for the recovery of species were prepared within legislated timelines)
- the state of program-level completion of strategies, plans, and protection measures
- related departmental reporting outside of the sustainable development strategy context



9.11 This audit is important because departmental sustainable development strategies are intended to provide information on actions that federal organizations are taking to support the goals and targets of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. Yearly progress reports can help Canadians and parliamentarians understand how federal organizations performed against their sustainable development strategies—for example, their progress on the species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal.

9.12 More details about the audit objective, scope, approach, and criteria are in [About the Audit](#) at the end of this report.

## Findings and Recommendations

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### Overall message

9.13 Overall, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada contributed to the federal species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy by identifying in their individual sustainable departmental strategies actions that they planned to take and aligning those intended actions with the federal strategy. However, these actions did not fully support meeting the federal species at risk target because the organizations' strategies did not include some conservation and recovery activities that are needed to track and demonstrate progress in these areas. Consistent with these gaps in departmental strategies, progress reporting by the 3 organizations on their planned actions missed some aspects of conservation and recovery activities that are needed to provide a complete picture. Moreover, none of these organizations reported how their actions helped to achieve the United Nations' Goal 15 (Life on Land), even though they are asked to provide this information in their corporate reporting.

9.14 Collectively, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada have the largest impact on protecting species at risk. Measurable actions and clear reporting on progress is important to convey whether Canada is meeting the goals the federal government has set.

## Organizations' contributions to meeting the federal species at risk target

### There were flaws in the design of the departmental sustainable development strategies

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#### What we found

9.15 In their sustainable development strategies, we found that Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada linked 15 actions to the federal species at risk target. We also found that the 3 organizations aligned their actions with the contributing actions in the federal strategy. However, we found that the actions and performance indicators that the organizations set out in their departmental sustainable development strategies for contributing to the federal species at risk target missed incorporating conservation and recovery activities that are needed to track and demonstrate progress toward meeting this federal target. We also found that most of the actions that Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada included in their strategies had problems with the performance measures designed to track progress.

9.16 The analysis supporting this finding discusses the following topics:

- [Departmental actions identified for achieving the federal target and contributing actions](#)
- [Some elements of the federal species at risk target missed](#)
- [Problems with performance measurement information](#)

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#### Why this finding matters

9.17 This finding matters because if available information on departmental actions in departmental sustainable development strategies does not cover all aspects set out in the federal strategy for the federal species at risk target, Canadians and members of Parliament cannot be certain about the progress made toward this federal target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal.

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#### Context

9.18 Departmental sustainable development strategies play an important role in making sustainable development decision making more transparent and accountable to Parliament. According to the guidance of Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, federal organizations are expected to describe the actions that they will undertake in support of the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy's goals, targets, and contributing

actions in their 2020–2023 departmental strategies. They are also expected to outline how they will measure their departmental actions and show results, including

- a starting point from which to measure progress
- a target to be reached by a certain date
- a relevant performance indicator to measure progress against their stated aim

9.19 Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada are responsible for identifying actions that contribute to meeting the species at risk target under the goal of Healthy Wildlife Populations in their departmental sustainable development strategies. This target encompasses 2 parts to be achieved by 2020, 1 of which was the focus of this audit: populations of species at risk listed under federal law exhibit trends consistent with recovery strategies and management plans.

9.20 As part of their legislated mandates for the conservation and recovery of species at risk, the 3 organizations deliver on a number of activities, some of which contribute to meeting the species at risk target in the context of the federal sustainable development strategy. The *Species at Risk Act* and the National Framework for Species at Risk Conservation articulate departmental conservation and recovery activities. Those relevant to this audit are recovery planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation ([Exhibit 9.2](#)).

## Exhibit 9.2—Conservation and recovery activities that are embedded within the federal species at risk target

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### Recovery planning

Recovery planning is a 2-stage process for species that have been listed under Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* as extirpated, endangered, or threatened:

1. Recovery strategy: Under the act, recovery strategies must be published on the Species at Risk Public Registry within the legislated timelines. If recovery is feasible, the recovery strategy must include a description of the species and its needs, identify the threats to its survival, identify critical habitat to the extent possible, state the population and distribution objectives that will assist the species' recovery and survival, and outline a general description of the research and management activities needed to meet these objectives.
2. Action plan: Under the act, an action plan must identify the activities required to address threats and to meet the population and distribution objectives outlined in the recovery strategy and when the activities will take place. The action plan must also identify the species' critical habitat to the extent possible and must be consistent with the recovery strategy. The recovery strategy indicates the timeline for completion of the action plan.

For a species listed as of special concern under the act, recovery planning is a 1-step process. A management plan must be published on the Species at Risk Public Registry within the legislated timelines. The management plan outlines conservation measures for the species to prevent it from becoming threatened or endangered.

### Implementation of recovery plans\*

- Implementation is the process of carrying out the actions identified in the recovery planning stage to achieve recovery and management goals or measures, objectives, and strategies.
- Implementation may be undertaken directly by the responsible federal organizations, provinces, or territories or by partners and stakeholders across Canada with federal, provincial, territorial, and non-governmental support and funding. Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada administer a range of funding programs to facilitate recovery actions by stakeholders.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation refer to the process of examining what has been done to date to ensure that the conservation and recovery activities are on the right track and are achieving the stated recovery goals and population and distribution objectives.

- Under the act, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada are required to monitor and report on the implementation of recovery strategies, management plans, and action plans.
- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (an independent scientific body) tracks changes in the population trends and status category of a species at risk. The species at risk population trends indicator shows whether population and distribution trends for species at risk are consistent with the objectives in recovery strategies and management plans. The indicator also measures progress toward the federal species at risk target in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. The indicator is updated yearly.

\* Note: In this audit, the term “recovery plans” includes recovery strategies, action plans, and management plans.

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Sources: *Species at Risk Act*; National Framework for Species at Risk Conservation, Government of Canada; Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators—Species at Risk Population Trends, Environment and Climate Change Canada

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Analysis to support  
this finding

**Departmental actions identified for achieving the federal target and contributing actions**

9.21 During our examination of departmental sustainable development strategies, we expected Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada to have developed actions to deliver against the target and the contributing actions in the federal strategy, as stipulated by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

9.22 We found that, in their departmental strategies, the 3 organizations collectively identified 15 actions for the species at risk target under the goal of Healthy Wildlife Populations.

9.23 We found that, to a large extent, Environment and Climate Change Canada aligned its departmental actions with the contributing actions in the federal strategy. As a result, the department's strategy addressed important components of the federal strategy, such as modernizing regulatory tools and implementing the Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada.

9.24 Similarly, we found that some of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's actions addressed contributing actions in the federal strategy, such as enabling stewardship actions in line with programs and funds named in the federal strategy. We also found that Parks Canada developed an action related to enhancing Indigenous foundational knowledge of species and habitats in the federal strategy.

**Some elements of the federal species at risk target missed**

9.25 In delivering against the federal species at risk target, departmental actions should relate clearly to the development and implementation of recovery strategies or management plans, related action plans, and monitoring activities to show the population trends for species at risk. We expected this because these key program delivery aspects, as summarized in Exhibit 9.2, are embedded in the federal species at risk target. In our opinion, the 3 organizations must include these aspects in their sustainable development strategies. This would allow them to be transparent and accountable in presenting their sustainable development decision making and their contributions to this target.

9.26 Overall, we found that the 3 organizations did not include in their departmental strategies all conservation and recovery activities that are needed to track and demonstrate progress toward meeting the federal species at risk target.

9.27 **Recovery planning.** We found that Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada identified actions and performance indicators related to the development of recovery strategies and management plans for species at risk. In contrast, we found that Parks Canada did not include information on the development of its recovery strategies and management plans. This is important because recovery strategies identify threats to species and their habitat, identify critical habitats as applicable, and set population and distribution objectives, all with the aim of arresting or reversing the decline of species at risk.

9.28 Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada did not include actions and performance indicators to show their progress toward the development of action plans for species at risk. As shown in Exhibit 9.2 above, action plans stem from recovery strategies and contribute to enabling their implementation. They are an important step toward ensuring that the recovery actions recommended in the recovery strategy are prioritized and implemented within prescribed timelines. In our opinion, reporting on the development of action plans in departmental sustainable development strategies is important because this is 1 of the 2 stages of recovery planning.

9.29 **Implementation of recovery plans.** Because the implementation of recovery strategies, management plans, and action plans contributes directly to species conservation and recovery, and therefore to the federal species at risk target, we expected the implementation of recovery plans to form part of the departmental strategies of the 3 organizations. We found that Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada did not include either an action or a performance indicator that provided meaningful information on the overall status of implementation of the recovery strategies, action plans, and management plans for listed species. Similarly, we found that Parks Canada did not include information on the implementation of recovery strategies and management plans but did include performance measurement information on the implementation of action plans in its strategy.

9.30 **Monitoring and evaluation.** We found that both Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada included performance indicators on species at risk population trends in their strategies. These indicators were directly related to 1 of the 2 indicators under the federal species at risk target. Fisheries and Oceans Canada's indicator covered aquatic species, while Environment and Climate Change Canada's indicator covered all species. In its strategy, Parks Canada did not include any indicator on progress toward achieving its species at risk recovery goals.

9.31 **Recommendation.** When developing strategies in support of the federal species at risk target, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada should provide relevant

actions and performance indicators that reflect the conservation and recovery activities that are embedded within the federal species at risk target.

**Response of each entity.** *Agreed.*

See [Recommendations and Responses](#) at the end of this report for detailed responses.

### **Problems with performance measurement information**

9.32 We found challenges with the performance measurement information related to the species at risk target in the departmental strategies of Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada in 11 of their 13 departmental actions. In some cases, no baseline, indicator, or target was included for actions. In others, it was not possible to link several sub-actions to objectives that Environment and Climate Change Canada wanted to achieve. In other cases, the starting points, performance indicators, or targets provided were not connected with the actions.

9.33 Furthermore, we found problems with the indicators selected for 2 actions on funding and stewardship programs to protect, conserve, and restore species and their habitat. The indicators for these departmental actions did not provide comprehensive measurement of the objectives of the action—for instance, how many species at risk or critical habitats benefited from recovery actions under these funding programs or to what extent this funding enabled the departments to ensure that activities supporting recovery plans were implemented.

9.34 **Recommendation.** Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada should clearly outline in their strategies how they will measure their departmental actions, using starting points, relevant performance indicators, and targets.

**Response of each entity.** *Agreed.*

See [Recommendations and Responses](#) at the end of this report for detailed responses.

## **Results reported did not cover all aspects of the federal species at risk target**

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### **What we found**

9.35 We found that for a third of the actions, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada did not report results against the performance indicators and targets presented in their sustainable development strategies because of

the effects of the **coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**<sup>1</sup> pandemic or the lack of data availability. They indicated that the pandemic limited their ability to collect data and measure progress for these performance indicators. For the remaining departmental actions reported, the 3 organizations measured progress toward the objectives set out in their strategies. However, we found that, just as the organizations did not integrate into their departmental strategies some of the conservation and recovery activities needed to demonstrate progress against the species at risk target, they also did not always report results on recovery planning for species at risk and its implementation or on monitoring and evaluation.

9.36 The analysis supporting this finding discusses the following topics:

- [No results reported on the indicators for a third of departmental actions](#)
- [Inconsistent progress reporting on aspects of the federal species at risk target](#)

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#### Why this finding matters

9.37 This finding matters because departmental sustainable development strategy reporting is meant to provide detailed information on the progress made by Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada on the actions in their sustainable development strategies.

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#### Context

9.38 In support of the commitment in the *Federal Sustainable Development Act* to make sustainable development decision making more transparent and accountable, federal organizations have committed to annually reporting information and results on their departmental sustainable development strategy. Environment and Climate Change Canada encouraged organizations to develop and implement systems and procedures to monitor progress and results in their strategies. These departmental sustainable development strategy reports are then tabled in Parliament.

9.39 We examined the first progress reporting completed by Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada on the actions in their 2020–2023 departmental strategies. More specifically, we assessed whether the 3 organizations reported progress on their individual actions and whether this reporting described how these results have directly contributed to meeting the species at risk target, as stipulated by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat in their guidance on how to report results.

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<sup>1</sup> **Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**—The disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).



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Analysis to support  
this finding

**No results reported on the indicators for a third of departmental actions**

9.40 We found that Environment and Climate Change Canada and Parks Canada did not report results on the stated indicators for 4 of 9 actions against their performance indicators and targets for achieving the federal species at risk target. The organizations indicated in their reports that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic limited their ability to collect data and measure progress on these performance indicators.

9.41 Environment and Climate Change did not report results on the stated indicators for 3 of its 7 actions:

- Implement the Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada with the collaboration of provinces and territories, Indigenous peoples, and stakeholders and through the following actions, enabled by investments under the Canada Nature Fund.
- Develop management and policy recommendations to implement a Pan-Canadian Approach to Wildlife Health through participation in the Wildlife Health Advisory Committee.
- Build capacity to protect, conserve, and restore species and their habitat.

9.42 Parks Canada did not report results against the stated indicator on the number of conservation and restoration projects that incorporate Indigenous knowledge for 1 of its 2 actions: “Advance protection and recovery action for priority species at risk including through the co-application of western science and Indigenous Knowledge in Conservation and Restoration projects, based on methodology developed in February 2020 with Indigenous partners.” Instead, the agency reported on various efforts and interim activities undertaken with its Indigenous partners, as pandemic circumstances allowed, to make greater use of foundational knowledge of species, habitats, and ecosystems.

9.43 Fisheries and Oceans Canada did not report results on 1 of its actions: “With our partners, strategically focus efforts and resources on shared priority places, species and threats to enable ecosystem-based approaches with multi-species and biodiversity conservation benefits.” The department reported that the results would be updated in the 2021–22 fiscal year. However, we found that at the outset, the department did not specify performance measures that would be used to report progress on the action.

### **Inconsistent progress reporting on aspects of the federal species at risk target**

9.44 In their reporting on delivering against the federal species at risk target, we expected Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada to report results on the development and implementation of recovery plans and on monitoring activities to show species at risk population trends, which are all embedded in the target (see Exhibit 9.2). We found that their reported results did not consistently cover those activities.

9.45 **Recovery planning.** Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada reported results toward the development of recovery strategies and management plans. Environment and Climate Change Canada mentioned that its target on the number of recovery strategies or management plans developed was not met, while Fisheries and Oceans Canada indicated that its target was met. We found that Parks Canada did not provide results on the development of recovery strategies or management plans, as this target was not included in its strategy at the outset (see paragraph 9.27).

9.46 **Implementation of recovery plans.** In accordance with its strategy, Parks Canada reported results on the implementation status of action plans. The agency indicated that its target on the percentage of actions in action plans that were to be implemented by March 2023 was not yet met, but it mentioned that it was on track to achieve the target. We found, however, that Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada did not report results on the implementation status of recovery plans.

9.47 **Monitoring and evaluation.** We found that Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada reported results to indicate whether recovery actions were effective in achieving the goals and objectives stated in recovery strategies and management plans through the species at risk population trends indicator. Parks Canada did not report progress against this particular indicator as it was not included in the agency's strategy at the outset.

9.48 We examined sustainable development strategy progress reporting by Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada on their results achieved in the area of monitoring and evaluation for 2020–21. We found that they were not on track to meet either the departmental target for aquatic species at risk or the federal target for the species at risk population trends indicator:

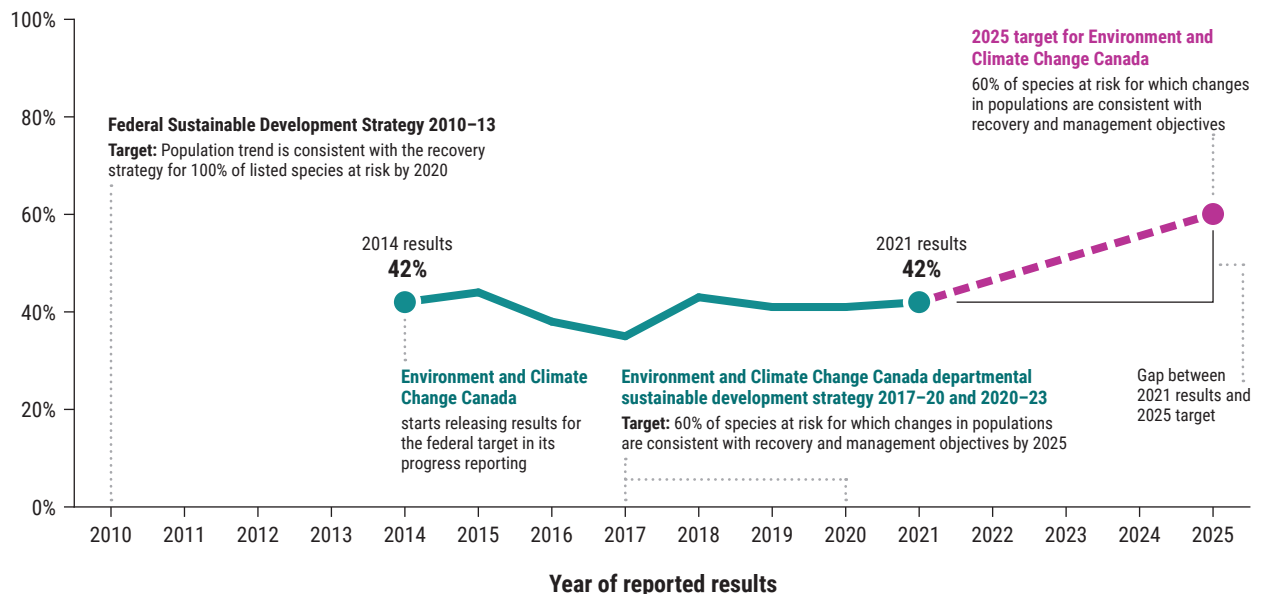
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada reported that 34% of aquatic species at risk were recovering in accordance with population and distribution objectives.

- Environment and Climate Change Canada reported on the federal target for species at risk indicator. The results showed a recovery rate of 42%.

9.49 We also looked at previously reported results of the species at risk population trends indicator found in Environment and Climate Change Canada’s reporting on departmental sustainable development strategy progress. We found that the federal target associated with this indicator had never been met. Over time, the target has varied from 100% to 60%, but the results were well below these targets, ranging from 35% to 44% over the past 8 years ([Exhibit 9.3](#)).

**Exhibit 9.3—Federal efforts to achieve population and distribution objectives for species at risk were not on track**

**Percentage of species at risk showing progress toward population and distribution objectives in recovery strategies or management plans found in sustainable development strategy progress reporting**



Notes:

- The 2013–16, 2016–19, and 2019–22 federal sustainable development strategies did not include a percentage for the species at risk target.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada’s 2017–20 and 2020–23 departmental sustainable development strategies both set a target of 60% to be achieved by 2025.

Source: Data from Environment and Climate Change Canada’s departmental sustainable development strategy progress reports

[See long description of Exhibit 9.3—Federal efforts to achieve population and distribution objectives for species at risk were not on track.](#)

9.50 **Recommendation.** When reporting on progress, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada should describe the results of their actions using relevant performance indicators that reflect the conservation and recovery activities that are embedded within the federal species at risk target.

**Response of each entity.** *Agreed.*

See [Recommendations and Responses](#) at the end of this report for detailed responses.

9.51 **Recommendation.** Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada, within their legislated mandates, should ensure that conservation and recovery activities are on track to meet the federal target on population objectives for species at risk.

**Response of each entity.** *Agreed.*

See [Recommendations and Responses](#) at the end of this report for detailed responses.

## Progress reporting on the advancement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land

### The 3 audited organizations did not report results achieved to advance the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land

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#### What we found

9.52 We found that the actions of Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada in their departmental strategies were linked with targets associated with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land. However, we found that the 3 organizations did not describe how their actions and corresponding results advanced the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 15 targets identified in either their departmental results reports or any other corporate reporting for the 2020–21 fiscal year.

9.53 The analysis supporting this finding discusses the following topics:

- [Links identified between departmental actions and the Sustainable Development Goal 15 targets](#)
- [Unclear contributions to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 15](#)

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#### Why this finding matters

9.54 This finding matters because the federal government expects organizations to be accountable for supporting the development of the national strategy and implementing the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals within their areas of responsibility.

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## Context



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Source: United Nations

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## Analysis to support this finding

9.55 In September 2015, Canada adopted the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The species at risk target is related, for instance, to United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15 (Life on Land) and more specifically to the following targets:

- 15.5: "Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species"
- 15.1: "By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements"

### **Links identified between departmental actions and the Sustainable Development Goal 15 targets**

9.56 In their guidance on reporting, Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat stipulated that organizations make links, when they exist, between their sustainable development actions and the United Nations' sustainable development targets.

9.57 We found that, in their departmental strategies, the 3 organizations followed this guidance and linked their departmental actions related to the federal species at risk target with United Nations' target 15.5. Environment and Climate Change Canada also identified a link for all of its 7 actions with United Nations' target 15.1.

### **Unclear contributions to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 15**

9.58 In the broader context of the federal government's reporting on results, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat asked organizations to describe how the results achieved by their policies, programs, initiatives, and investments contributed to advancing 1 or more of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, as applicable. In the context of this audit, we expected each of the 3 organizations to have reported progress in their departmental results reports and any other corporate reporting for the 2020–21 fiscal year.

9.59 Beyond their identifying the linkages with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15 and relevant targets, we found

that the 3 organizations did not elaborate on how their programs and activities contributed to advancing achievement of the goal and targets in any of their reporting for the 2020–21 fiscal year.

- In its 2020–21 departmental results report, Fisheries and Oceans Canada mentioned that it continued to contribute to implementing the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 15. However, the department did not report on how it advanced this goal or the related target 15.5 identified in its sustainable development strategy.
- In their 2020–21 departmental results reports, Environment and Climate Change Canada and Parks Canada listed initiatives that supported the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 15 without indicating how the corresponding results directly affected the achievement of targets 15.1 or 15.5.

9.60 **Recommendation.** Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada should ensure that they report on their contributions toward the achievement of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets in order to improve assessment and outcomes.

**Response of each entity.** *Agreed.*

See [Recommendations and Responses](#) at the end of this report for detailed responses.

## Conclusion

9.61 We concluded that Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada contributed to meeting the federal species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. In their departmental sustainable development strategies, the organizations identified actions to contribute to this target. However, the actions and performance indicators that they set out in their strategies missed incorporating some conservation and recovery activities that were needed to fully track and demonstrate progress toward meeting the target. Performance information was also either missing or incomplete for most of the actions that Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada included in their strategies.

9.62 The 3 organizations reported progress toward meeting the objectives set out in their strategies related to conservation and recovery activities that are embedded within the species at risk target. However, consistent with the gaps in the design of these strategies, progress reporting missed some aspects of those conservation and recovery activities that were needed to provide a complete picture.

9.63 We concluded that the organizations' contributions to meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15 were unclear because neither their departmental results reports nor any other corporate reporting for the 2020–21 fiscal year described how their actions and corresponding results made progress toward Goal 15 targets.

## About the Audit

This independent assurance report was prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada on the contribution of departmental sustainable development strategies to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. Our responsibility was to provide objective information, advice, and assurance to assist Parliament in its scrutiny of the government’s management of resources and programs and to conclude on whether Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada contributed to meeting the species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and the related United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land, as applicable to each entity.

All work in this audit was performed to a reasonable level of assurance in accordance with the Canadian Standard on Assurance Engagements (CSAE) 3001—Direct Engagements, set out by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA Canada) in the CPA Canada Handbook—Assurance.

The Office of the Auditor General of Canada applies the Canadian Standard on Quality Control 1 and, accordingly, maintains a comprehensive system of quality control, including documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards, and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

In conducting the audit work, we complied with the independence and other ethical requirements of the relevant rules of professional conduct applicable to the practice of public accounting in Canada, which are founded on fundamental principles of integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behaviour.

In accordance with our regular audit process, we obtained the following from entity management:

- confirmation of management’s responsibility for the subject under audit
- acknowledgement of the suitability of the criteria used in the audit
- confirmation that all known information that has been requested, or that could affect the findings or audit conclusion, has been provided
- confirmation that the audit report is factually accurate

### Audit objective

The objective of this audit was to determine whether Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada contributed to meeting the species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and the related United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land, as applicable to each entity.



## Scope and approach

We audited whether the 3 organizations that contributed to meeting the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy's species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal did the following in their 2020–2023 departmental sustainable development strategies:

- established departmental actions that complied with the expectations contained in the guidance from Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat with regard to preparing departmental sustainable development strategies for the 2020–2023 period
- implemented the plans and reported the extent to which they met the objectives set out in their departmental sustainable development strategies and followed the 2020–21 guidance for reporting provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
- in corporate reporting available for the 2020–21 fiscal year, reported on how the results achieved by their policies, programs, initiatives, or investments contributed to advancing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land, as identified in their departmental sustainable development strategies

We did not audit organizations that were not required to contribute to the strategy under subsection 11(1) of the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*.

Audit evidence was gathered through document reviews, interviews with federal officials, and data analysis. The officials also provided supporting evidence for the results reported for selected departmental actions in their 2020–21 departmental sustainable development strategy reports.

## Criteria

Criteria	Sources
<p>We used the following criteria to determine whether Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada contributed to meeting the species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and the related United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land, as applicable to each entity:</p>	
<p>Organizations prepared departmental sustainable development strategies that contribute to meeting the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy’s target on species at risk under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Federal Sustainable Development Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Auditor General Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Achieving a Sustainable Future: A Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for Canada 2019–2022</i>, Environment and Climate Change Canada</li> <li>• <i>Guidance for the Preparation of Departmental Sustainable Development Strategies 2020–2023</i>, Environment and Climate Change Canada and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019</li> </ul>
<p>Organizations implemented the plans and reported the extent to which they met the objectives set out in their departmental sustainable development strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Federal Sustainable Development Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Auditor General Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Achieving a Sustainable Future: A Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for Canada 2019–2022</i>, Environment and Climate Change Canada</li> <li>• <i>Guidance for the Preparation of 2020–21 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy Reports</i>, Environment and Climate Change Canada and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2021</li> </ul>

Criteria	Sources
<p>We used the following criteria to determine whether Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada contributed to meeting the species at risk target under the Healthy Wildlife Populations goal in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and the related United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land, as applicable to each entity:</p>	
<p>Organizations reported how the results achieved by their policies, programs, initiatives, or investments contributed to advancing the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 15 of Life on Land, as identified in their departmental sustainable development strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Federal Sustainable Development Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Auditor General Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Achieving a Sustainable Future: A Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for Canada 2019–2022</i>, Environment and Climate Change Canada</li> <li>• <i>Guidance for the Preparation of Departmental Sustainable Development Strategies 2020–2023</i>, Environment and Climate Change Canada and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019</li> <li>• <i>Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy 2020–2023</i>, Environment and Climate Change Canada</li> <li>• <i>Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy 2020–2023</i>, Fisheries and Oceans Canada</li> <li>• <i>Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy 2020–2023</i>, Parks Canada</li> <li>• <i>Guide to Preparing the 2020–21 Departmental Results Report</i>, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2021</li> <li>• <i>Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i>, United Nations</li> <li>• <i>Towards Canada’s 2030 Agenda National Strategy, Interim Document: Sustainable Development Goals, Employment and Social Development Canada</i>, 2019</li> </ul>

### Period covered by the audit

The audit for the first criterion covered the 2020–2023 departmental sustainable development strategies or else the departmental sustainable development strategies that were in place during the 2020–21 fiscal year.

The audit for the second criterion covered the 2020–21 departmental sustainable development strategy reports.

The audit for the third criterion covered any corporate reporting available for the 2020–21 fiscal year.

To gain a more complete understanding of the subject matter of the audit, we also examined certain matters that preceded the starting dates noted for the 3 criteria.

## Date of the report

We obtained sufficient and appropriate audit evidence on which to base our conclusion on 23 August 2022 in Ottawa, Canada.

## Audit team

This audit was completed by a multidisciplinary team from across the Office of the Auditor General of Canada led by David Normand, Principal. The principal has overall responsibility for audit quality, including conducting the audit in accordance with professional standards, applicable legal and regulatory requirements, and the office's policies and systems of quality management.

## Recommendations and Responses

In the following table, the paragraph number preceding the recommendation indicates the location of the recommendation in the report.

Recommendation	Response
<p><b>9.31</b> When developing strategies in support of the federal species at risk target, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada should provide relevant actions and performance indicators that reflect the conservation and recovery activities that are embedded within the federal species at risk target.</p>	<p><b>Environment and Climate Change Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. Environment and Climate Change Canada, in consultation with the Sustainable Development Office, will leverage the development of our 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revisit internal guidance for departmental sustainable development planning and reporting</li> <li>• review the alignment of performance information to the relevant Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Goal</li> <li>• present key actions and performance indicators that relate to Environment and Climate Change Canada’s responsibility for protecting and conserving species at risk</li> </ul> <p><b>Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. The 2022–26 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy is expected to be tabled in Parliament in November 2022, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada will develop its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy by November 2023. When developing departmental strategies in support of the federal target on species at risk for inclusion in its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will review, strengthen, refine, and add (as appropriate) actions and performance indicators to ensure that the key elements of the recovery process are reported on accordingly.</p> <p>Implementation date: November 2023</p> <p><b>Parks Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. While ensuring adherence to the guidance from Environment and Climate Change Canada and/or Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (as applicable), during the development of and subsequent reporting on the 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, Parks Canada will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reassess the relevancy of performance indicators related to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy goal</li> <li>• present key actions and performance indicators that relate to Parks Canada’s responsibility for protecting and conserving species at risk</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Response
<p><b>9.34</b> Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada should clearly outline in their strategies how they will measure their departmental actions, using starting points, relevant performance indicators, and targets.</p> <p><b>9.50</b> When reporting on progress, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada should describe the results of their actions using relevant performance indicators that reflect the conservation and recovery activities that are embedded within the federal species at risk target.</p>	<p><b>Environment and Climate Change Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. Environment and Climate Change Canada, in consultation with the Sustainable Development Office, will leverage the development of our 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy to revisit its internal guidance for departmental sustainable development planning and reporting to ensure the information relevant to Federal Sustainable Development Strategy goals identifies performance information such as starting points, indicators, and targets.</p> <p><b>Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. The 2022–26 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy is expected to be tabled in Parliament in November 2022, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada will develop its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy by November 2023. As part of its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will ensure that departmental actions are measured in clear and meaningful ways, including starting points, relevant performance indicators, and targets.</p> <p>Implementation date: November 2023</p> <p><b>Environment and Climate Change Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. Environment and Climate Change Canada will ensure that it works toward reporting on progress using relevant performance indicators related to the federal species at risk target.</p> <p><b>Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. The 2022–26 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy is expected to be tabled in Parliament in November 2022, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada will develop its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy by November 2023. When reporting on progress toward the federal target on species at risk as part of its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will ensure that the results of departmental actions are clearly described and that performance indicators are relevant and encompass the key elements of the recovery process.</p> <p>Implementation date: November 2024 (as part of the annual Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy report).</p> <p><b>Parks Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. Parks Canada will work toward reporting on progress using relevant performance indicators related to the federal species at risk target.</p>

Recommendation	Response
<p><b>9.51</b> Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada, within their legislated mandates, should ensure that conservation and recovery activities are on track to meet the federal target on population objectives for species at risk.</p>	<p><b>Environment and Climate Change Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. Environment and Climate Change Canada will work toward ensuring that results and progress are reflected in its Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy Report.</p> <p><b>Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. The 2022–26 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy is expected to be tabled in Parliament in November 2022, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada will develop its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy by November 2023. As part of its 2023–27 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will work with Environment and Climate Change Canada (as the lead department for Species at Risk Population Trends and Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators) toward reporting on the trends of species population and distribution vis-à-vis objectives laid out in the recovery strategies or management plans, noting that the recovery or management of species is affected by many factors, including the species’ life span, reproductive cycle, the state of their habitat, and threats such as habitat loss and pollution.</p> <p>Moreover, Fisheries and Oceans Canada has started to track the percentage of measures in action plans and management plans that are underway or completed.</p> <p>Implementation date: November 2023</p> <p><b>Parks Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. Parks Canada will continue to direct management efforts to the recovery of individuals of species at risk on Parks Canada–administered lands, working toward meeting the target on population and distribution objectives for species at risk and acknowledging that recovery of a species is impacted by environmental factors beyond the agency’s control and borders, such as climate change, habitat loss and degradation, and pollution. Parks Canada will report on progress toward the recovery of species at risk through publicly available reports, such as the agency’s Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy Report, in collaboration with Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Fisheries and Oceans Canada.</p>

Recommendation	Response
<p><b>9.60</b> Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Parks Canada should ensure that they report on their contributions toward the achievement of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets in order to improve assessment and outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Environment and Climate Change Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. Environment and Climate Change Canada will ensure that reporting on contributions toward the achievement of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets will be completed in the appropriate reporting avenues, including Employment and Social Development Canada’s 2030 Agenda National Strategy and departmental plans and departmental results reports. The department will work to improve the quality of reporting and avoid unnecessary duplication.</p> <p><b>Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. The 2022–26 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, which is expected to be tabled in Parliament in November 2022, is based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In support of the 2022–26 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and as part of its 2023 to 2027 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will ensure that contributions toward the achievement of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals are appropriately documented and publicly reported on, as directed by the relevant guidance from Environment and Climate Change Canada or the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, as applicable.</p> <p>Implementation date: November 2024 (as part of the annual Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy Report)</p> <p><b>Parks Canada’s response.</b> Agreed. While adhering to the guidance from Environment and Climate Change Canada and/or the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (as applicable), Parks Canada will ensure that contributions toward the achievement of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets are clearly reported on via appropriate public avenues.</p>



## Appendix 1—Organizations Subject to the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*

On 1 December 2020, amendments to the *Federal Sustainable Development Act* came into force. These amendments significantly expanded the number of federal organizations that must contribute to developing the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, including the upcoming 2022–26 documents, and report on their contributions through their own departmental sustainable development strategies, among other obligations. As of 1 December 2020, there were 100 organizations subject to the act.

The addition of these organizations to the schedule of the *Federal Sustainable Development Act* widened the scope of the act’s application and will promote greater coordination of actions related to sustainable development across the federal government.

Under the previous *Federal Sustainable Development Act*, there were 27 organizations that contributed to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. Collectively, these organizations have developed a total of 648 actions under their 2020–2023 sustainable development strategies that contributed to the federal strategy’s 13 goals, as illustrated in the table below.

Note: The numbers below represent the number of actions per organization and per goal.

Designated organizations listed in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy	Effective action on climate change	Greening government	Clean growth	Modern and resilient infrastructure	Clean energy	Healthy coasts and oceans	Pristine lakes and rivers	Sustainably managed lands and forests	Healthy wildlife populations	Clean drinking water	Sustainable food	Connecting Canadians with nature	Safe and healthy communities	Number of actions contributing to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization	Number of goals contributed to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	5	15									11			31	3
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency		3	2		1									6	3
Canada Border Services Agency		16							1		1		6	24	4
Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions		5	2											7	2

Designated organizations listed in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy	Effective action on climate change	Greening government	Clean growth	Modern and resilient infrastructure	Clean energy	Healthy coasts and oceans	Pristine lakes and rivers	Sustainably managed lands and forests	Healthy wildlife populations	Clean drinking water	Sustainable food	Connecting Canadians with nature	Safe and healthy communities	Number of actions contributing to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization	Number of goals contributed to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization
Canada Revenue Agency		23												23	1
Canadian Heritage		13												13	1
Department of Finance Canada	2	5			1									8	3
Department of Justice Canada		10												10	1
Employment and Social Development Canada		19												19	1
Environment and Climate Change Canada	23	15	2		2	5	17	5	11			3	19	102	10
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	2	16				10	3		6		3		1	41	7
Global Affairs Canada	2	8	4											14	3
Health Canada	3	13								1	2		13	32	5
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada		9												9	1
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada	4	15			1						4		5	29	5
Indigenous Services Canada	4	14		3	1					2	1		5	30	7

Designated organizations listed in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy	Effective action on climate change	Greening government	Clean growth	Modern and resilient infrastructure	Clean energy	Healthy coasts and oceans	Pristine lakes and rivers	Sustainably managed lands and forests	Healthy wildlife populations	Clean drinking water	Sustainable food	Connecting Canadians with nature	Safe and healthy communities	Number of actions contributing to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization	Number of goals contributed to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada	6	21	21	2										50	4
National Defence		13							1				2	16	3
Natural Resources Canada	8	5	4	4	9	4	2	3					2	41	9
Parks Canada	1	15				2	1	3	2			4	2	30	8
Prairies Economic Development Canada		2	2											4	2
Public Health Agency of Canada	1	14								1				16	3
Public Safety Canada	6	8											1	15	3
Public Services and Procurement Canada		16									2		2	20	3
Transport Canada	11	16	1			11							4	43	5
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat		5												5	1
Veterans Affairs Canada		10												10	1

Designated organizations listed in the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy	Effective action on climate change	Greening government	Clean growth	Modern and resilient infrastructure	Clean energy	Healthy coasts and oceans	Pristine lakes and rivers	Sustainably managed lands and forests	Healthy wildlife populations	Clean drinking water	Sustainable food	Connecting Canadians with nature	Safe and healthy communities	Number of actions contributing to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization	Number of goals contributed to the 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy per organization
Number of departmental actions per federal goal	78	324	38	9	15	32	23	11	21	4	24	7	62	648	
Number of organizations contributing to each federal goal	14	27	8	3	6	5	4	3	5	3	7	2	12		

## Appendix 2

### Exhibit 9.3—Federal efforts to achieve population and distribution objectives for species at risk were not on track [Back to Exhibit 9.3](#)

This graph shows federal efforts to achieve population and distribution objectives for species at risk were not on track. The graph shows the targets since 2010 from federal and departmental sustainable development strategies, the results from 2014 to 2021 found in progress reporting about departmental sustainable development strategies, and the gap between the 2021 results and the 2025 target.

During the period from 2014 to 2021, the percentage of species at risk showing progress toward their population and distribution objectives has remained steady in the range of 35% to 44%. An interesting highlight is that in both 2014 and in 2021, the result was the same: 42% of species at risk showed such progress. A gap exists between the 42% results in 2021 and the 60% target in 2025. Progress is required to advance from the 42% result in 2021 to the 60% target in 2025 that Environment and Climate Change Canada set in 2017 and again in 2020.

The details in this graph from 2010 to 2025 are as follows:

In 2010, the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy 2010–13 set the following target: Population trend is consistent with the recovery strategy for 100% of listed species at risk by 2020.

In 2014, Environment and Climate Change Canada started releasing results for the federal target in its progress reporting. That same year, 42% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

In 2015, 44% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

In 2016, 38% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

In 2017, Environment and Climate Change Canada's departmental sustainable development strategy for 2017–20 set the following target: 60% of species at risk for which changes in populations are consistent with recovery and management objectives by 2025. That same year, 35% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

In 2018, 43% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

In 2019, 41% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

In 2020, Environment and Climate Change Canada's departmental sustainable development strategy 2020–23 set the following target again: 60% of species at risk for which changes in populations are consistent with recovery and management objectives by 2025. That same year, 41% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

In 2021, 42% of species at risk showed progress toward the population and distribution objectives, according to recovery strategies or management plans found in departmental sustainable development strategy progress reporting.

The 2025 target for Environment and Climate Change Canada is 60% of species at risk for which changes in populations are consistent with recovery and management objectives. A gap exists between the 2021 results (42%) and the 2025 target (60%) that Environment and Climate Change Canada set in 2017 and again in 2020.

Notes:

The 2013–16, 2016–19, and 2019–22 federal sustainable development strategies did not include a percentage for the species at risk target.

Environment and Climate Change Canada's 2017–20 and 2020–23 departmental sustainable development strategies both set a target of 60% to be achieved by 2025.

Source: Data from Environment and Climate Change Canada's departmental sustainable development strategy progress reports

