



Species at Risk Act, Section 11 and 12 – First Nations opportunities Webinar

Friday, March 21, 2025, 1-3 pm ET | Virtual



Background

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy organization that works to advance the collective aspirations of First Nations individuals and communities across Canada on matters of national or international nature and concern. The AFN is mandated by the First Nations-in-Assembly (elected Chiefs or proxies from member First Nations), who have advanced resolutions that prioritize First Nations' leadership in conservation both domestically and internationally. The AFN supports First Nations by advocating for legislative and policy change, as well as coordinating and facilitating First Nations-led conservation initiatives. In 2019, First Nations-in-Assembly passed Resolution 95/2019 *First Nations Full Partnership in the Implementation of the Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada*, which directs the AFN, amongst other mandates, to ensure that the Pan-Canadian Approach appropriately reflects and considers regional First Nations differences and concerns.

Since 2019, the AFN Environment Sector has been actively participating in conservation efforts for Species at Risk (SAR). Through engagement and evidence-based information sharing, the AFN Environment Sector has worked in collaboration with the IISAAK OLAM Foundation to host several national and regional dialogue sessions centred around the concept of *culturally significant species* – a term considered by participants to be more inclusive of First Nations interests and priorities regarding biodiversity conservation. Additional efforts included the review of the Species at Risk Act (SARA), identifying specific Sections and areas of the Act that can be leveraged by First Nations. This webinar will focus on the process of advancing Section 11 and 12 agreements under the SARA.

Species at Risk Act

The Species at Risk Act, SC 2002, c. 29. (SARA) received royal assent in 2002 to advance Canada's commitments under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. The main objectives of the Species at Risk Act are to:

- Prevent wildlife species in Canada from disappearing.
- Provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered, or threatened because of human activity; and
- Manage species of special concern to prevent them from becoming endangered or threatened.

The SARA calls upon governments, organizations, and individuals across Canada to work together in the assessment of species and the implementation of species' protection and recovery measures, including sanctions for offences under SARA.

[Link to the Species at Risk Act S-15.3.pdf](#)



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Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada

The *Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada* (Pan-Canadian Approach) was introduced in 2018. The Pan-Canadian Approach shifts from a single-species approach to a multi-species and ecosystem approach which focuses conservation efforts on priority places, species, sectors, and threats across Canada. This approach calls for collaborative action and partnership between provinces, territories and stakeholders to implement mitigation measures and improve conservation outcomes for species at risk. Key sectors identified under the Pan-Canadian Approach include agriculture, forestry, and urban development.

On April 19th, 2021, the federal government committed \$2.3 billion over five years for the protection of land and water, including supporting Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, Indigenous Guardians program, provincial and territorial protected areas and protecting species at risk. This investment for nature in the 2021 federal budget reaffirmed Canada's commitment to the protection of 30% of lands and oceans by 2030.