REPORTING



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for Conservation Policy

Reporting Private Area-Based Conservation Sites

A Guide to the Databases for Canadian Land Trusts



Prepared by **Guy Greenaway** | 2026

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October 2026

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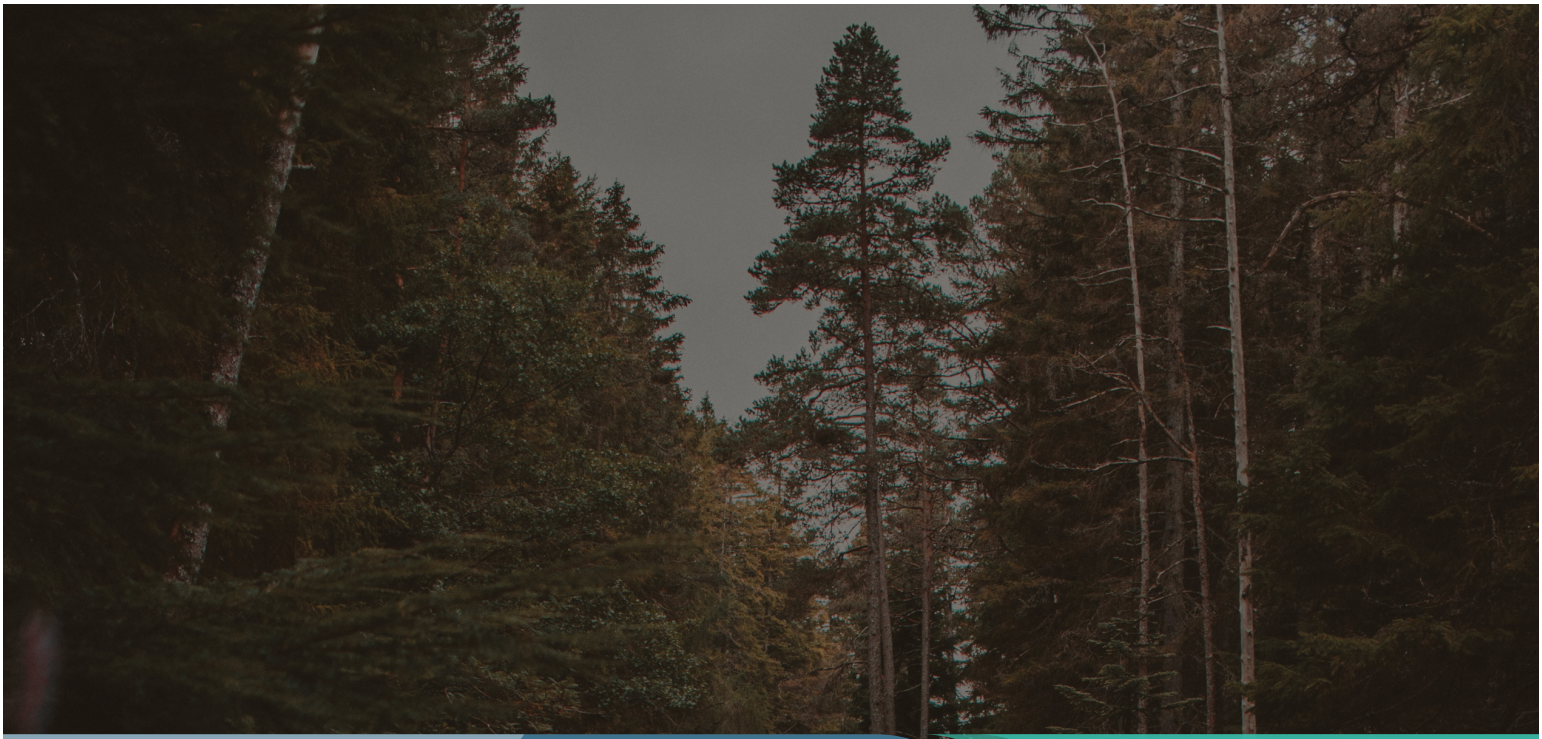
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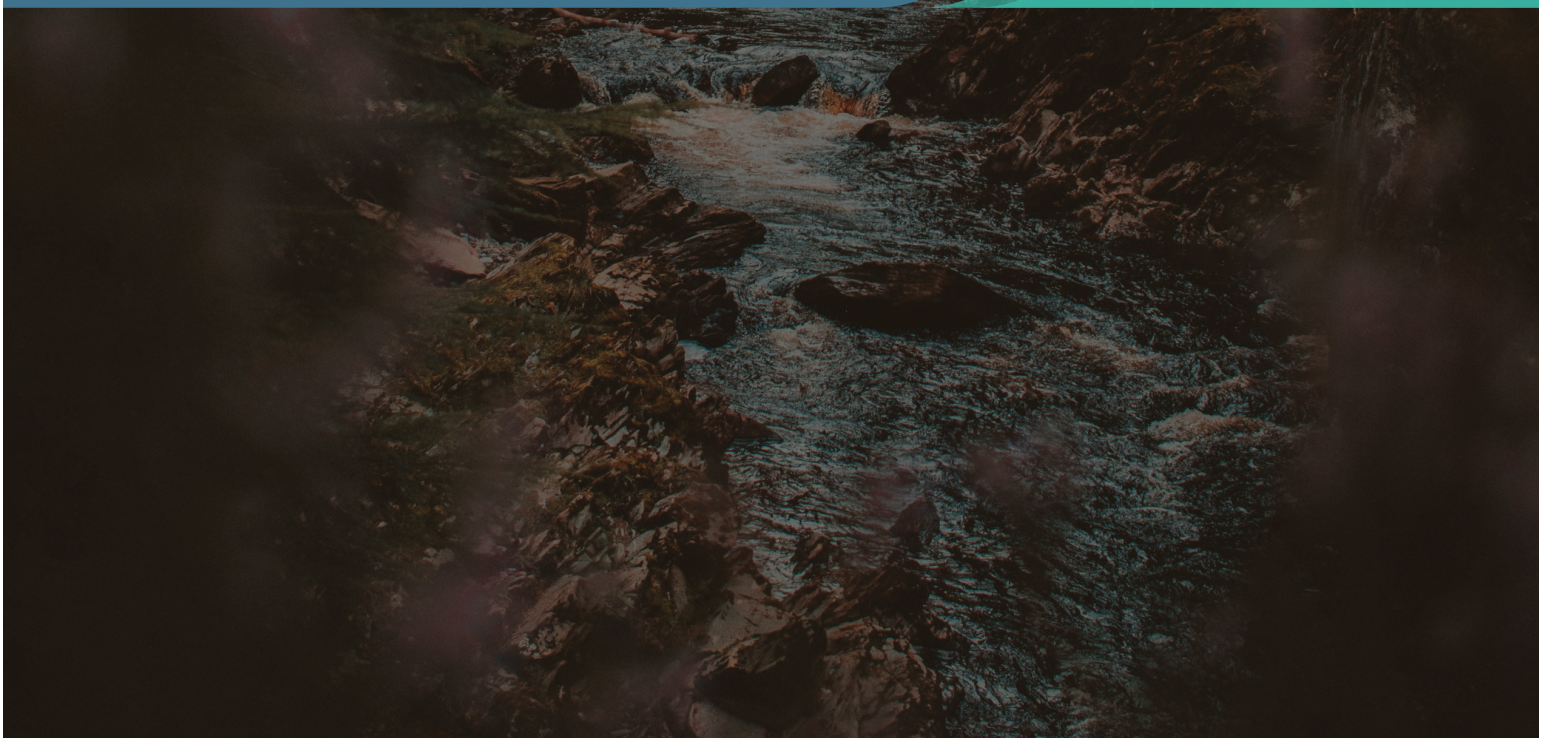
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Executive Summary



Executive Summary

ToC

The desire to report on progress towards protecting nature has increased, especially with the Convention on Biological Diversity goal to protect 30% of our land and freshwater by 2030. This guidebook was created to assist Canadian land trusts in reporting their area-based conservation projects (largely fee-simple land acquisitions or conservation easements) into the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) and/or the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA).

This report relies on the previous two documents in the series to provide a basic explanation of the databases (Area-Based Conservation Designations: A Primer for Canadian Land Trusts) and detailed guidance for determining if a project is 'area-based conservation' (Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts).

For either the national or international database, land trust users follow the same process:

1. Determine if a project is 'area-based conservation'
2. Choose the database to which to submit
3. Fill in the identified fields
4. Use the Designation guide for the hard questions
5. Follow the submission directions

For each database, descriptions are given for the available guidance, submission process, verification process, and privacy and data sharing. Detailed guidance for filling database fields is provided, with fields gathered into groupings of Names, IDs, and Zones; Geography; Designation; Ownership and Governance; Management; Status and Timing; and Data Provision.

Appendices provide advanced information regarding key concepts, complex fields, and technically-complex fields, as well as a complete listing of the fields for each database.



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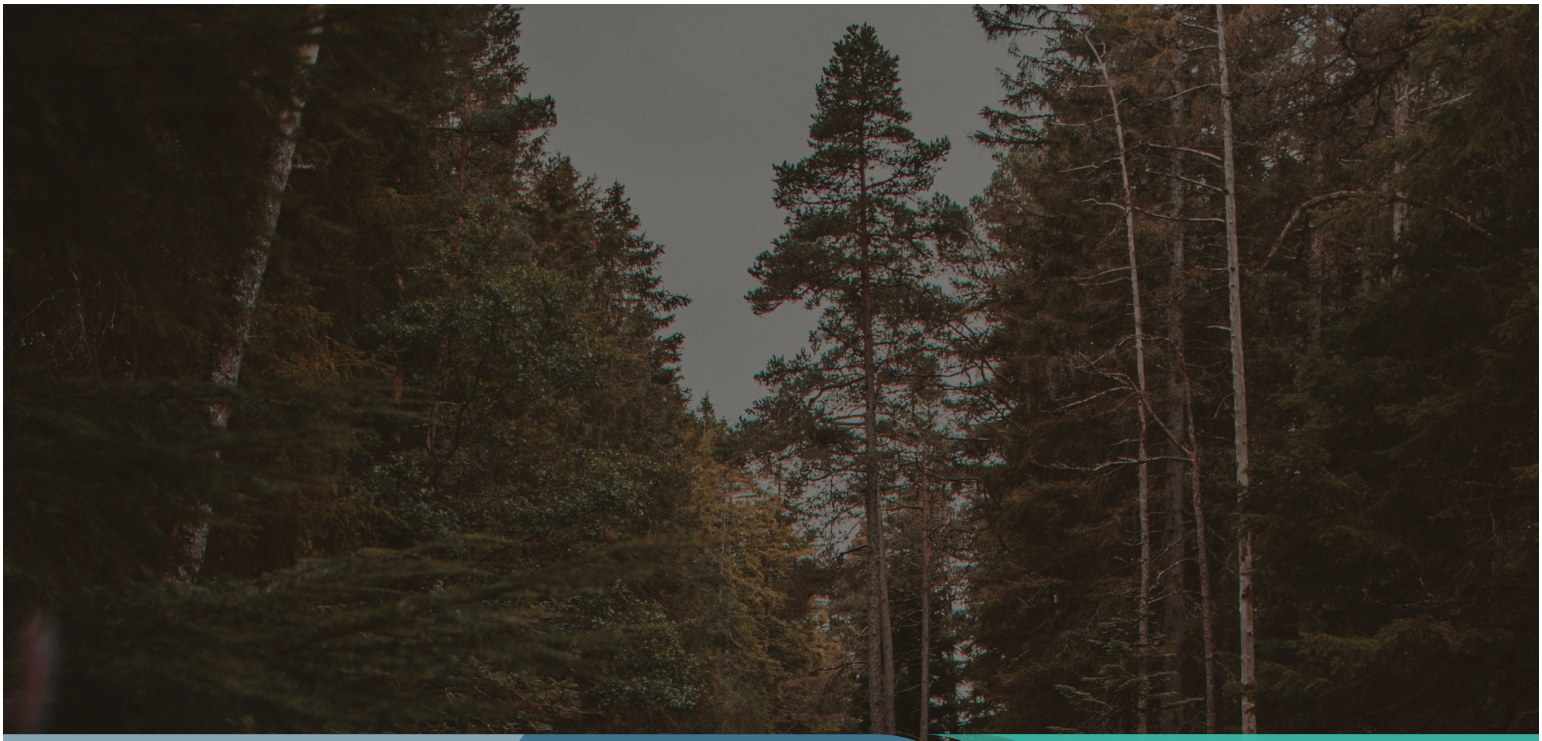
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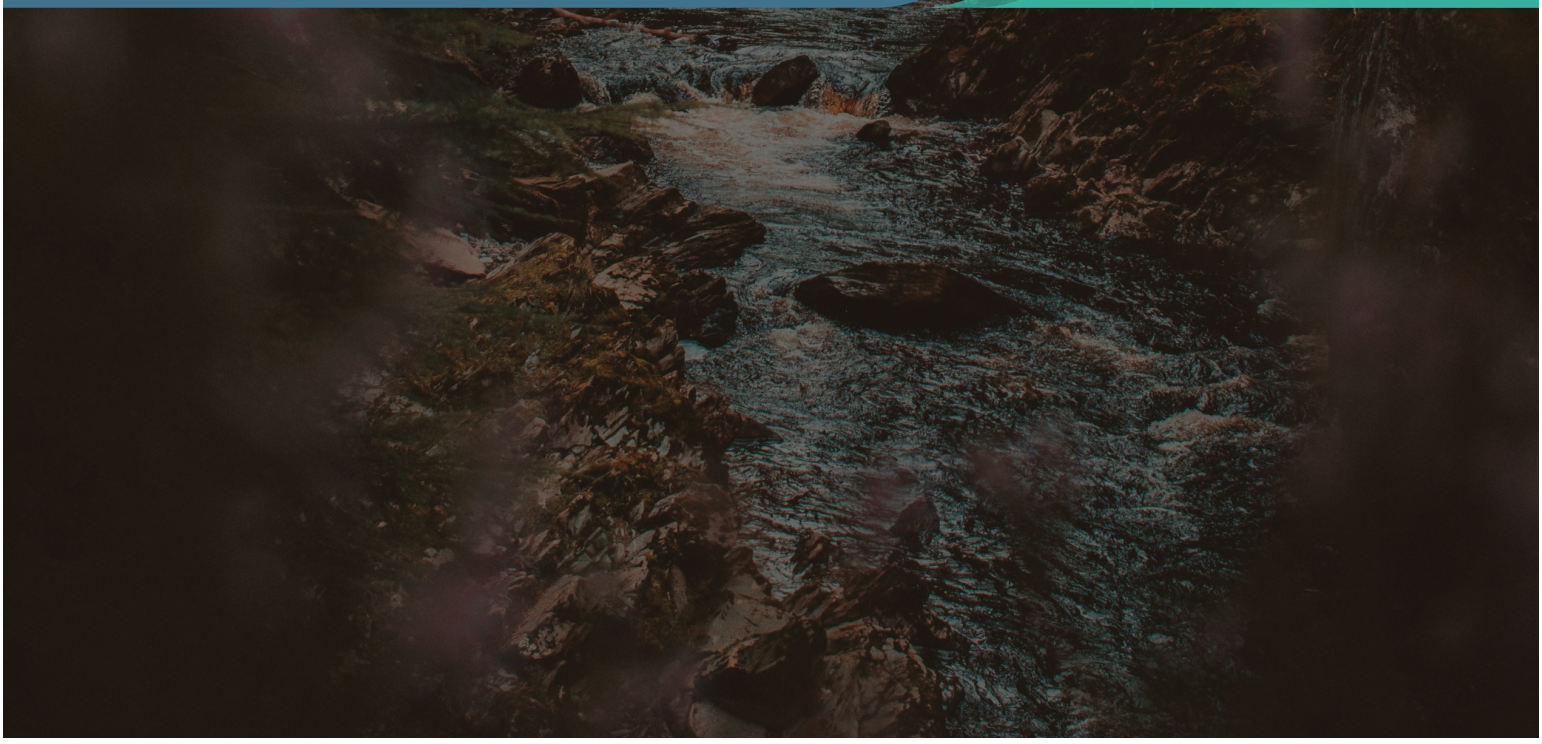
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CHAPTER

Introduction



Introduction

Of late, the desire has increased to report on our global progress in protecting biodiverse areas of the planet. Although not begun by the goal to protect 30% of our land and freshwater by 2030 (CBD 2022), that has focused the minds of many agencies and organizations.

Canadian land trusts[1] are somewhat caught in the crossfire, as pressure increases to report their conservation projects, but the reasons for doing so are largely from others, and the guidance offered is largely inapplicable, having been designed for areas of public land protected by state governments.

Area-based conservation[2] activity and progress is tracked nationally by the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)[3] and internationally by the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)[4].

This guidebook was created to assist Canadian land trusts in reporting their area-based conservation projects (largely fee-simple land acquisitions or conservation easements[5]) into one or both of those databases. It is the third in a series, but readers are welcome to start (and remain) here.

The previous two documents in the series are:

ONE: Area-Based Conservation Designations: A Primer for Canadian Land Trusts

- The Primer provides the background summary of area-based conservation reporting (i.e., Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures) in the context of land trusts, the origins of the databases, the reporting process in general, and why this whole esoteric tumult is important to land trusts.

TWO: Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts

- While the Primer lays out the basics of Privately Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures, this decision-support tool uses the globally-accepted IUCN definitions for these designations, and provides a detailed basis for assessing private land conservation projects to determine if they constitute area-based conservation (i.e., Protected Areas, OECMs, or neither).

How to Use This Guidebook

1. Determine if a project is 'area-based conservation'

This is the most complex part, and involves using the previous guide in the series: *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*. The end goal is simple – to determine if a land trust's conservation project, constitutes 'area-based conservation' as defined by the IUCN (i.e., is a Privately Protected Area of private OECM), and therefore eligible for submission to either database.

2. Choose the database to which to submit

Canadian land trusts are free to submit their project to either the national or the international database, as any entity who is the Governing Authority of an area-based conservation project (and ONLY that Governing Authority) is allowed to submit to either database. Submissions to the CPCAD database will automatically be forwarded to the WDPCA by the federal *Environment, Climate Change, and Nature* ministry. Each database has it quirks, and the Canadian one has traditionally been very hard for land trusts to access, but either is a good option.

1 'Land trust' is a generic term for not-for-profit, registered charities with a mandate to conserve biodiversity (or other values) on privately held lands. These may be local, regional, provincial, or national, and may use the phrase 'land trust' or 'conservancy' or neither in their name. Most land trusts focus on biodiversity conservation, but many focus on agricultural, Indigenous culture, recreation, scenery, etc., or even a mix of these. This document uses the term 'land trust' to refer to all such organizations, and focuses on land trusts with a biodiversity conservation mandate.

2 For definitions of this term and the other jargon laced through this document, see *Appendix 1: Terminology*.

3 CPCAD is managed by the federal government's *Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Nature* (ECCN) on behalf of the Pan-Canadian Conservation initiative, a collective of federal / provincial / territorial jurisdictions with responsibility for protected areas.

4 The WDPCA is managed by the *United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre* (UNEP-WCMC) on behalf of themselves and the *International Union for Conservation of Nature's* (IUCN's) *World Commission on Protected Areas* (WCPA).

5 In this document, the term *Conservation Easement* is used to refer to legislatively-enabled private-property easements and covenants that apply positive and/or negative requirements on the owner of a property in favour of protecting the identified conservation values of a property. Canadian provincial and territorial law enabling this tool may refer to these as Conservation Easements, Conservation Covenants, and/or Conservation Agreements.

3. Fill in the identified fields

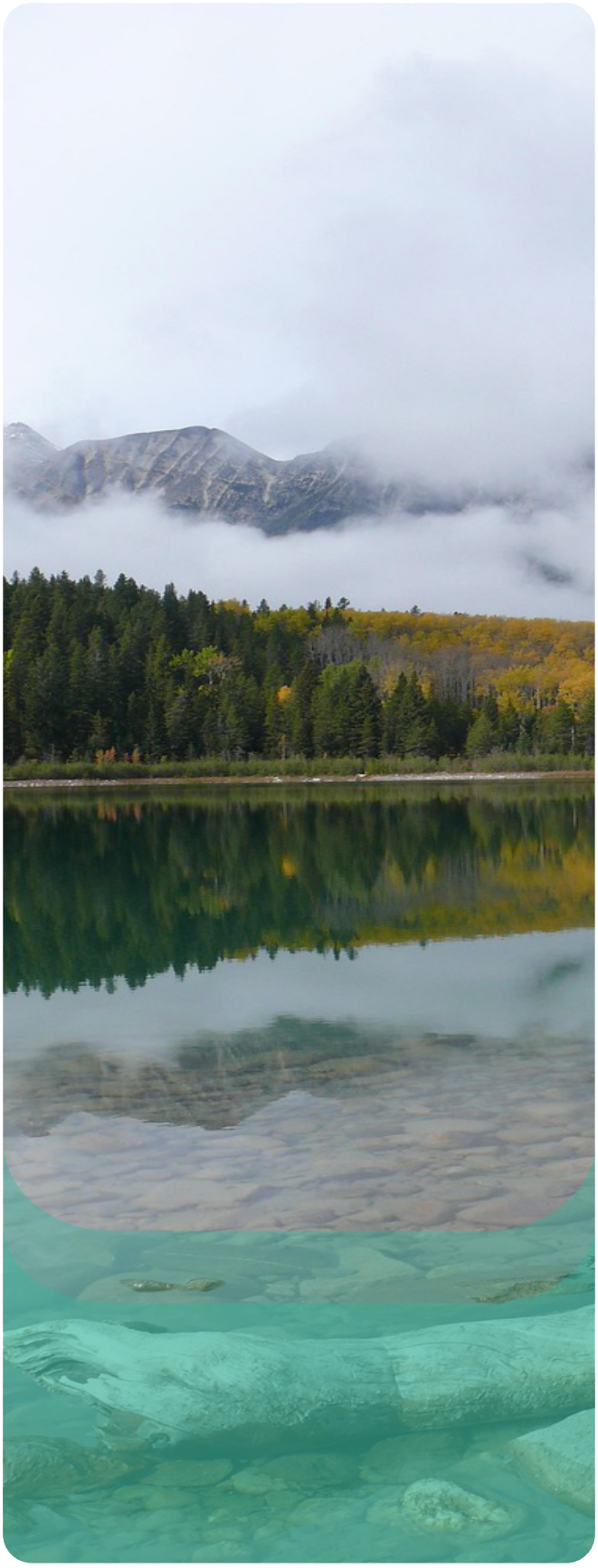
For the chosen database, the land trust needs to fill in that catalogue's fields. Supporting that activity is the role of this Guidebook.

4. Use the Designation guide for the hard questions

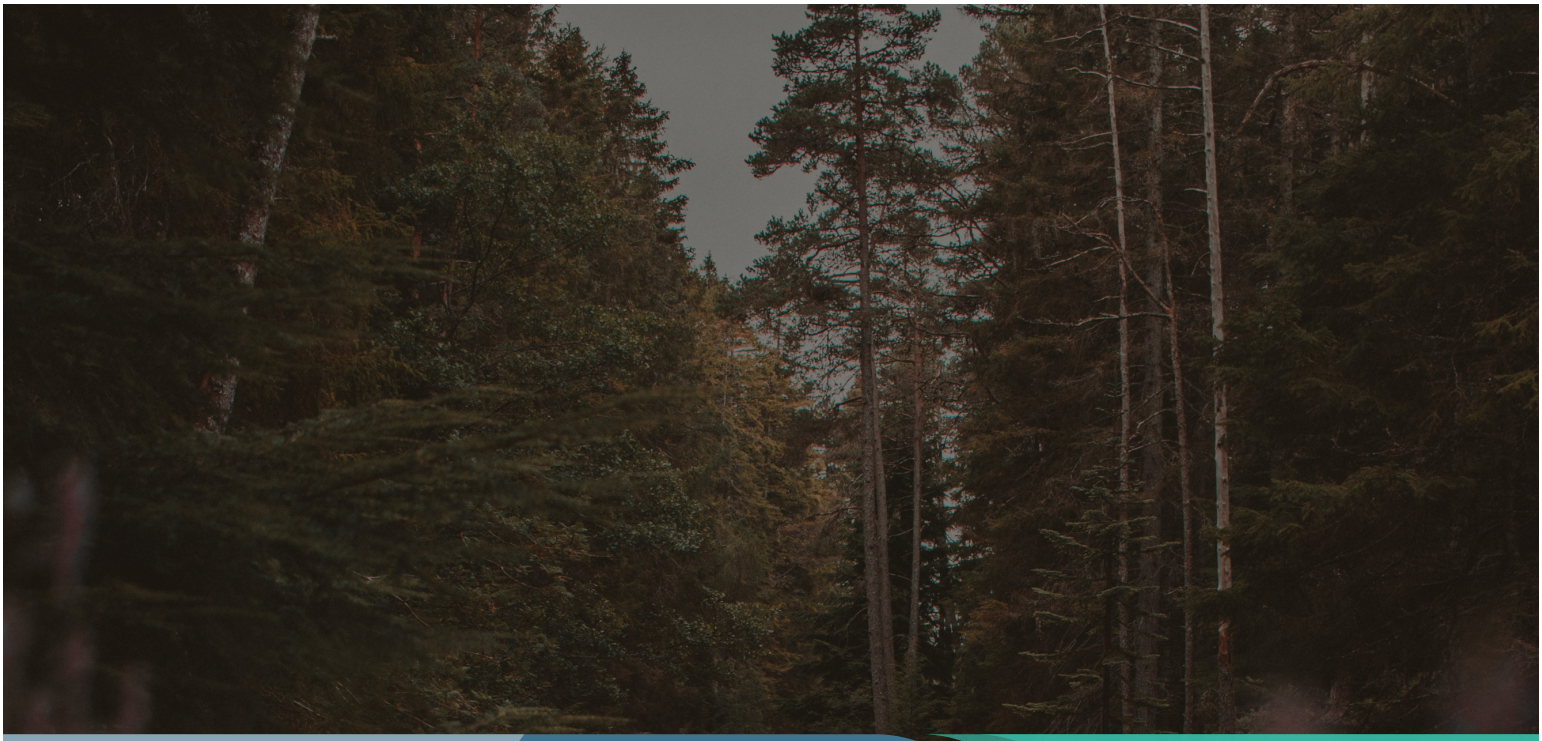
Some fields / questions are simple, some are straightforward but require specific answers, and some require more complex answers and supporting data. This is also the role of the previous Guidebook, *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*. Refer back to that guide, and the answers that were developed for the candidate project site.

5. Follow the submission directions

Each database has specific submission directions, including how the project should be submitted, what spatial data should be provided, and what supporting information is needed. They will also provide direction on what verification is needed, and how that can be acquired.



ToC



CHAPTER 2

The Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)



The Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)

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Overview

Background

Canada has committed to reporting all of its Protected Areas (PAs) and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) (or 'Conserved Areas') to the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA). These international bodies leave it to each country to design their own procedures for collecting, assessing, and reporting, but do offer some fundamental standards that must be respected (Stolton et al 2014, Mitchell et al 2018).

The coordinating mechanism in Canada for this task is the *Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database*, a pan-Canadian resource, managed on behalf of all Governing Authorities[6] by Canada's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Fields

The CPCAD database has nearly forty fields that must be completed for each area-based conservation project submitted, not all of which are mandatory, and not all of which are applicable to Canada's land trusts. Each field must be filled in according to specific parameters laid out by the database. Some fields are generated by the database manager, some are optional, and many have specific data-type requirements.

Appendix 2: Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Field List contains the entire list of fields for CPCAD.

Guidance

Guidance for the submission of sites to CPCAD largely comes from Canada Conservation – A Pan-Canadian Pathway Initiative.

In 2010, the Convention on Biological Diversity released their Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, with the flagship goal (known as Target 11) of protecting 17% of land and freshwater by 2020 (PT1 2018). Representatives from Canada's federal, provincial, and territorial governments gathered to reinterpret the guidance and renumber the targets. The 17% goal became "Target 1", and they branded their initiative "Pathway to Target 1".

Several tools were created for government agencies to use – voluntarily – to guide their collective, verification, and submission of area-based conservation sites to the newly-minted Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database. The Pathway to Target 1 group re-branded as Canada Conservation, and the previous tools have carried over – often with the 'pathway' moniker – and are still in use today. These include:

Decision Support Tool: For Assessing Areas Against Pan-Canadian Standards for Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMS) for Terrestrial and Inland Waters (2021) https://canadaconservation.ca/wp-content/uploads/DST_03-2021-EN.pdf

- 2025 Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) User Manual (2025)
- Reporting Protected and Conserved Areas for Inclusion in CPCAD. [nd].

Minimal participation from the private land conservation and municipal conservation interests meant no guidance was created for these sectors and no consultation undertaken.

Submission

The submission process has evolved since the first days of the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database, largely in an effort to increase the hectares in the database that count towards Canada's 30x30 target (now called Target 3!).

Initially, only "jurisdictions" were allowed to submit (meaning the federal, provincial, and territorial agencies) or entities anointed by them. Eventually submission guidance came into alignment with the international database, which prescribed that only the Governing Authority could authorize the release of the data.

The legacy is a bit of a mish-mash, with some provincial governments still insisting on submitting on behalf of the land trusts within their boundaries, while others work with their provincial land trust alliances, others submit directly to the national database, and still others submit directly to the international database.

6 'Governing Authorities' are the entities responsible for the area-based conservation site, and may be federal/provincial/territorial govts; land trusts; NGOs; municipalities; etc.

ToC

Currently, the submission process – as described by Canada Conservation – has the following characteristics (Canada Conservation 2026):

- Any Governing Authority (i.e., any land trust) can submit their area-based conservation project to CPCAD.
- A Crown government or an NGO can submit on behalf of a land trust, provided they have their permission.
- Consent of all legal landowners is required.
- The federal government may request to be involved in the early stages of submission if the Governing Authority is unfamiliar with the process
- A land trust may request assistance from federal, provincial, territorial government.
- A land trust need only submit the geospatial polygons that delineate the boundaries of the area, and a filled-in list of all the database fields to be included in CPCAD.

(see *Appendix 3: Submission Guidelines for CPCAD*, for detailed quotes from Canada Conservation regarding the submission process).

Verification

Verification of data for CPCAD is vague at best. Following from the international database, anything a government signs off on is automatically "verified", but unlike the international process, there is no option for "expert verification." Nor is there a need.

The various guidance documents above go to great lengths to clarify they are intended for support, but are voluntary. The submission description from Canada Conservation (2026) repeats, "*It is the responsibility of the governing authority to determine if an area is a protected area or an OECM and thus eligible to be included in CPCAD*."

As a federated country, with the provinces responsible for land and resource management, it is difficult to create a 'national' standard. Indeed, Canada Conservation points out how two provinces – Quebec and British Columbia – continue to play an outsized role in creating their own standards (Canada Conservation 2026).

- "Québec develops its own instruments to implement the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and to contribute to the achievement of the Kunming-Montreal Targets. Québec sets its own conservation priorities and timelines on its territory, and collaborates with the federal government and the provinces and territories when deemed necessary. Québec contributes to the pan-Canadian effort and reports to CPCAD."
- "Following the passage of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act in November 2019, British Columbia is developing its own instruments to assess the reporting eligibility of OECMs to CPCAD to account for the provincial land use and reconciliation context."

Were these approaches only applicable to Crown lands, they would be relatively benign, but the language varies from "**under** their jurisdiction" to "**within** their jurisdiction," where the latter is interpreted spatially, and as meaning any parcel within their boundaries. This vagary has significant implications for protected lands under private governance.

Regardless, land trusts in all ten provinces are free to submit directly to CPCAD, though they may have to forego support of various kinds from their provincial government in doing so.

(see *Appendix 3: Submission Guidelines for CPCAD*, for detailed quotes from Canada Conservation regarding the verification process).

Privacy and Data Sharing

For land trusts, privacy and data sharing with regard to CPCAD has two dynamics: sharing data with the database, and how data is shared by the database.

Sharing Data with CPCAD

Land trusts need to be conscious of what data they are sharing with CPCAD and how they are sharing it, especially in the case of conservation easements. CPCAD requires that reporting authorities provide digital mapping files that delineate the boundaries of the each area-based conservation project, and some personal/organizational data.

The database is adamant that submitters only share data to which they are legally entitled. For conservation easements, this means land trusts must secure permission before sharing the name of the Management Authority (i.e., the landowner),.

Digital or other data used in the development of a project may be subject to data-sharing agreements, in which case land trusts need to ensure they are following those restrictions or obtaining the necessary permissions. This may also include clauses in the conservation easement agreements relating to the sharing of data.

ToC

Even naming conventions should be scrutinized to ensure they are not oversharing. For example, "The John Smith" property may inadvertently be sharing personal data.

Data Sharing by CPCAD

Data within the CPCAD is intended to be shared widely – that is the point of it. It can be used for integrated conservation planning, tracking progress on various conservation programs, etc. As CPCAD is managed by Environment and Climate Change Canada, it is subject to the Open Government Licence and Access guidelines. In summary, these allow:

- Unrestricted public access on the website, including a web mapping viewer and the ability to download shapefiles and databases;
- Freedom to "copy, modify, publish, translate, adapt, distribute or otherwise use the Information in any medium, mode or format for any lawful purpose" (ECCC 2025), with only a requirement to acknowledge the source of the data.

However, personal privacy laws are still in place, which prevent the sharing of personal information (names, addresses, contact information ,etc.). Regardless, in submitting data, a land trust will be required to give written permission to share their name and role as governing, managing, and/or reporting authority.

Unlike the international database, at this time CPCAD has no options to restrict the sharing of specific fields. There is also no option to "blur" spatial data by providing non-explicit spatial data.

(see *Appendix 3: Submission Guidelines for CPCAD*, for detailed quotes from Canada Conservation and regarding privacy and data sharing).



ToC

CPCAD Submission Guidance for Land Trusts

The focus of this guidance is on those Fields which the Reporting Authority (i.e., the land trust) must provide, and especially those that require some guidance to navigate.

To make it easier to understand, this document gathers the fields into logical groupings (though they may not appear in that order in the database). For each of those groupings, this Guidebook provides a summary of the fields themselves and what needs to be included, as well as reporting guidance specific to land trusts.

The Appendices include the entire list of fields for CPCAD, with more detail on data controls, minimums, etc. for each field (see Appendix 2: Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Field List).



Names, IDs, and Zones

Fields that relate to the way the Governance Authority names and – potentially – separates a fee-simple property or conservation easement into zones for more specific management objectives.

IDs

These are unique identifiers chosen by the database managers. No action is required by the Reporting Authority.

Names

The Governance Authority chooses the name they wish the area-based conservation project to be known by. The name can be reported in English, French, and/or an Indigenous language.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If the area is a conservation easement, avoid using the name of the landowner in the title for the sake of their privacy.

Zones

A land trust's fee-simple property or conservation easement may be divided into different areas based on ecological characteristics, management requirements, etc. CPCAD considers these areas or 'Zones' to be the basic spatial building block of the database, so conservation properties must be reported with reference to this. This means:

- The entire area is called the "Parent" and has a unique ID in the database (PARENT_ID).
- That Parent may be broken into 'Zones', each of which has a unique Zone ID and an associated description (ZONE_ID, ZONEDESC) but the same Parent ID.
- Each Zone becomes a separate record in the database.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If all sub-areas of the property or easement (i.e., Zones) have essentially the same character with regard to its conservation contribution, there is no need to divide them for the database.
- If the management plan associated with the property makes stark distinctions of sub-areas based on significantly different management approaches, these should be assessed as to whether they constitute Zones.
- If an area within the PPA or private OECM has been explicitly excluded from management for conservation (e.g., a future housing envelope, a day-tripper parking lot, a concentration of agricultural infrastructure) these areas should not be reported as part of the Parent conservation area, and therefore not as a Zone.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Parent Identification Number	PARENT_ID	A numeric identifier based on the Data Provider Code, and the identity number chosen for the area
Name – English Name – French Name - Indigenous Languages	NAME_E NAME_F NAME_IND	The name the Governance Authority wants the area known by
Zone Identification Number Zone Description – English Zone Description - French	ZONE_ID ZONEDESC_E ZONEDESC_F	If the 'Parent' area is separated into 'Zones', each becomes a unique record in the database

ToC

Geography

Fields that relate to the size and location of the area-based conservation project.

Areal Measure

The Reporting Authority must give a numeric value (in hectares) of the Privately Protected Area or OECM (a.k.a. Conserved Area).

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If the area is divided into Zones, this measure would be for each Zone.
- The total area should match the geospatial area of the polygon provided.

Location

The Location is simply the province/territory where the private land conservation project exists.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If the area is divided across a provincial/territorial border, this should be accounted for in the Zonation, ensuring there is congruence between the Zone boundaries and the provincial/territorial separation.
- Land trusts will only need to consider their province or territory for this field (Fisheries and Oceans Canada has a distinct set of marine area categories).

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Official Area	O_AREA_HA	The total area in hectares (ha) of the Protected or Conserved Area.
Location	LOC	The province or territory where the conservation area is located

Designation

Fields that relate to the designation and recognition of the area-based conservation project.

Biome Type

The Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database is set up to make distinctions between area-based conservation set in place over marine areas versus terrestrial/freshwater areas. The Governance Authority must indicate within which 'biome' their project exists.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If an area-based conservation project (or a Zone within) extends over both terrestrial/freshwater and marine areas, CPCAD requires zonation be used to distinguish the two 'Biomes' so the associated conservation activity can be reported on by Biome.

Designation Type

The CPCAD includes both Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures, and the Governance Authority must indicate which designation applies to their area-based conservation project.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- While not needed for submission to the database, a justification for the choice between PPA and a private OECM should be created based on the IUCN guidance, and then kept by the Governance Authority in case of any audit of the database contents.
- For guidance on how a land trust can make this determination in the context of the protected and conserved area databases, see *Appendix 4: Protected Area or OECM.*
- For a full guide to assessing all facets an area-based conservation project (Privately Protected Area or OECM) against the IUCN definitions, land trusts should see *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*[7] .

7 Specifically, see the section *Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions | Protected Area or OECM.*

ToC

Conservation Objectives

For CPCAD, the Conservation Objectives field does not house the conservation objectives. Rather this is a field stating whether the conservation objectives for an OECM are primary, secondary, or tertiary.

In effect, this digs one level further down after identifying an area-based conservation project as an OECM, above, under Designation Type.

- Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:
- This field only applies to area-based conservation projects which are being submitted as private OECMs (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures).
- This field can be confusing because the distinguishing characteristic between Protected Areas and OECMs is the primacy of biodiversity conservation as a management objective: Protected Areas have this as a 'primary' goal, while OECMs have it as a 'secondary' or 'ancillary' goal[8]. Yet, 'primary conservation' is an option here. This reflects a 'sub-purpose' of the OECM designation which allows Governing Authorities to submit a Protected Area as an OECM if there is strategic value in avoiding the term 'protected area.'
- See Appendix 5: Identifying or Establishing Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures for more detail on this distinction.
- See *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*[9] for how a land trust can make the determination of whether their project should be submitted as a Privately Protected Area or a private OECM.

IUCN Protected Area Management Category

To facilitate a more synchronized approach internationally to terminology, management approaches, and evaluation associated with protected areas, the IUCN articulated six (6) protected area management categories (Dudley 2008). CPCAD requires this field for protected areas (but not OECMs). Because these categories are focused on ***management*** approach and not related to ***governance*** type, they are applicable to Privately Protected Areas.

The application of these categories is most applicable to publicly-protected areas at the national level, but they were developed comprehensively, and all of the categories apply to Privately Protected Areas. There is a tendency to default to one category for private land conservation (Category IV), but that is not always the most appropriate choice.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- This field is only for PPAs and not private OECMs. If a land trust has determined their area-based conservation project is an OECM, they should enter "Not applicable"
- Any of the categories could apply to a Privately Protected Area (Dudley 2008), however Categories Ia, III, IV, V, and VI are the most likely matches.
- See *Appendix 6: IUCN Protected Area Management Categories*, for descriptions of the categories, and more detailed guidance

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas

In some cases, Privately Protected Areas and private Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures may also be designated as Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). The Governance Authority can indicate if that is so, as well as add an Indigenous-language name for the area, if desired.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- Designation of IPCAs is a distinct process, and any private Governance Authority wishing to identify an area-based conservation project as an IPCA must follow the procedures and secure the permissions outlined by that process (see Canada Conservation, Indigenous Circle of Experts).

Enabling Mechanism

Land that simply contains highly biodiverse areas cannot be said to be 'conserved', unless there is some binding mechanism that controls use of the land in a way that supports its natural features and systems in perpetuity.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- CPCAD's frame of reference for the Enabling Mechanisms was one of publicly-protected areas, where a distinct piece of legislation led to a 'gazetted' (officially announced or proclaimed by a government) park or similar designation; this is not the case for

8 *"While protected areas must have a primary conservation objective, this is not necessary for OECMs. OECMs may be managed for many different objectives but they must deliver effective conservation."* (IUCN WCPA 2019)

9 Specifically see *Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions | Protected Area or OECM*.

ToC

private area-based conservation.

- Land trusts should enter the name of the protective device used (e.g., 'fee-simple ownership' or 'conservation easement'). A list of potential choices can be found in *Appendix 7: Choosing an Enabling Mechanism Descriptor*.
- It is possible to give the specific name of the agreement (e.g., "Smith Property Conservation Easement"), but land trusts should avoid doing so.
- Land trusts should see *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*[10] for further guidance.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Biome Type	BIOME	Distinction between 'Marne' and 'Terrestrial/ Freshwater'
Designation Type	PA_OECM_DF	Declaration of whether this is a Protected Area (PA) or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure (OECM)
Conservation Objectives	CONS_OBJ	[Applies only to an OECM] Statement of whether the conservation objectives are 'primary', secondary, or 'ancillary.'
IUCN Protected Area Management Category	IUCN_CAT	[For Protected Areas] Identification of which of the 6 IUCN management categories relates best to the area
Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) IPCA	IND_TERM	Statement of whether this area is also considered an IPCA, and if so, the Indigenous name for it
Enabling Mechanism – English Enabling Mechanism - French	MECH_E MECH_F	The enabling mechanism that provides the area-based conservation certainty.



10 Specifically, see the section *Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions | Protective Mechanism*.

ToC

Ownership and Governance

Fields that relate to the type and identity of the entities who own the property and who are responsible for governance of the area-based conservation.

Fields that relate to the type and identity of the entities who own the property and who are responsible for governance of the area-based conservation.

Ownership

These fields capture the 'Type' of ownership as well as and the name of the legal owner of the property submitted as an area-based conservation site.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- For fee-simple properties, in general, the land trust is the owner, and the ownership *Type* is 'Non-profit Organizations'.
- For conservation easements, in general, the landowner is the owner, and the Type is 'Individual Landowners.'
- With conservation easements, land trusts need to be careful regarding sharing the information of private individuals. For these cases, rather than entering the landowner's name, it is recommended that land trusts simply enter 'Private Landowner.'
- See Appendix 8: Describing Governance, Ownership, and Management, for details on the 'Ownership Types' applicable to land trusts' area-based conservation projects.

Governance Type

Governance "refers to who decides what [the] objectives are, what to do to pursue them, and with what means" (Mitchell et al 2018). Governance *Type* captures the kind of entity that Governing Authority is.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- For the most part, the Governance Type for land trust projects will be 'Non-profit organizations'.
- With a conservation easement, while the 'Owner' and the 'Manager' is most often the landowner, the Governing Authority is the holder of the easement, as that is where the governance-level direction with regard to the protective device sits. In these cases, therefore, the Type is generally 'Non-profit Organizations.'
- See *Appendix 8: Describing Governance, Ownership, and Management*, for details on the 'Governance Types' applicable to land trusts' area-based conservation projects.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Ownership Type – English Ownership Type – French Owner – English Owner – French	TYPE_E TYPE_F OWNER_E OWNER_F	The type of owner of the area (chosen from a list of options), and the name of the entity that holds legal or customary ownership or tenure.
'Type' of the Governing Authority	GOV_TYPE	The 'Type' of entity responsible and accountable for making decisions about how Privately Protected Area or private OECM is managed.

Management

Fields related to the entity responsible for carrying out the land management activities in alignment with the governing authority's objectives.

Managing Authority

The Management Authority field lists who is the entity or person charged with managing the land.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- For a fee-simple property owned (and managed) by a land trust, the land trust would be the Managing Authority.
- If the land trust has an agreement with another entity to manage the property (e.g., a leaseholder), then this entity is the Managing Authority.
- For a conservation easement, in general, the Managing Authority is the fee-simple landowner, who is bound by the restrictions and prescriptions of the conservation easement.
- For conservation easements and fee-simple ownership where a private individual manages the property, land trusts need to be careful regarding sharing the information of private individuals. For these cases, rather than entering the landowner's name, it is recommended that land trusts simply enter 'Private Landowner' for a conservation easement, and (e.g.) 'Private Leaseholder' for fee-simple properties, as needed.

Management Plan

The Management Plan field is a simple binary question of whether the area-based conservation project is subject to a management plan, and if so, then directions to access that plan.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- These fields are optional, and were developed primarily for public lands with an obligation to share the management strategy with the citizenry.
- For fee-simple properties, Stolton et al (2014) suggest that to satisfy the 'Dedicated' element of a Privately Protected Area requires "Publicly available long-term management plans with indication of dedication to conservation."
- For conservation easements, management plans – if they exist – may also be shared. However, such management plans may be separate from the easement agreement, and regardless will involve the private landowner. Land trusts should secure the permission of the landowner before making them available. Unlike fee-simple properties, it is the conservation easement agreement that needs to be publicly accessible, rather than any associated management plans.
- Management plans will – hopefully – be created in the spirit of adaptive management, meaning they will be subject to change, so any direction to the plan should be responsive to avoid having to update this field on a regular basis.

Management Effectiveness Evaluation

This field is a binary yes/no question of whether a Management Effectiveness Evaluation has been completed for the proposed site. This draws from the traditional lack of effectiveness evaluation for public parks and protected areas, and the increase in the use of tools such as (Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) to address this.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- This field is optional.
- Despite the often very robust monitoring and adaptive management structures built into land trusts' area-based conservation projects, land trusts should ignore this field, as it was not intended to refer to private land conservation.

Marine Resource Use

Despite being called 'No Take' and making no reference to the ocean in the field description, these fields reference marine areas that are subject to some sort of area-based conservation designation. 'No Take' refers to the management approach being taken in that conserved marine region.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- Unless subject to extremely rare circumstances, land trusts will choose 'Not Applicable' for this field, as ownership of the ocean bed and water is vested in the Crown.
- For the No Take Area field, enter '0'.

ToC

Subsurface Rights

The Pan-Canadian Conservation initiative (formerly *Pathway to Target 1*) is very clear in their decision-support tool that the simple existence of sub-surface rights held by a third does not affect area-based conservation designations (PT1 2021). This is likely because provincial, territorial, and federal governments can issue dispositions for any type of use – including granting and giving access to subsurface rights – as they desire.

Despite this, CPCAD options for this field include: "All subsurface rights are extinguished or withdrawn(...)"; "Surface access is not permitted(....)"; and "Surface access may occur (...)"

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- This field is optional, and has no analogous field in the international database.
- Land trusts should ignore this field, and instead focus on the role that potential sub-surface activity may have in a site's ability to satisfy the overall area-based conservation designation.
- (see *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*, especially Appendix 4: Addressing Other Rights and Tenures, and *Underlying Concern: Assessing and Mitigating Subsurface Mineral Risk Under Privately-Conserved Properties* for a more detailed consideration of the topic).

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Managing Authority – English Managing Authority – French	MGMT_E MGMT_F	The agency, organization, individual, or group that manages the Privately Protected Area or private OECM (in both English and French).
Management Plan Management Plan Reference	MPLAN MPLAN_REF	A description of whether or not a site has a management plan or equivalent conservation planning mechanism., and if so the URL link or citation.
Management Effectiveness Evaluation	M_EFF	A yes/no indication of whether a management effectiveness evaluation has been done.
Marine Resource Use No Take Area (ha)	NO_TAKE NO_TAKE_HA	For marine area-based conservation projects, and indication of whether "the taking of living or dead natural resources" is prohibited, and if so, over how many hectares.
Subsurface Right Status	SUBSRIGHT	Information on a subset of approaches to ensuring subsurface rights do not affect in situ conservation of biodiversity.

ToC

Status and Timing

Fields related to the status of the area-based conservation site.

Administrative Status of the Site

The administrative status field was created largely to make two distinctions: between interim/proposed projects and fully-realized projects, and between sites recognized legally/formally and those with no formal recognition.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- Refer to *Appendix 9: 'Status' of Area-based Conservation Sites* for detail on how the status of a land trust's area-based conservation project would be determined.
- In general, properties subject to the "covenants of NGOs" (i.e., conservation easements), and fee-simple properties subject to the "policies of established non-governmental organizations" (i.e., land trusts), should be entered as having "Designated" status.

Time Stamps

CPCAD tracks the year in which an area-based conservation project is first established, when it is recognized, and if applicable 'delisted.' Despite the name, 'delisting' actually refers to the site being terminated, not just delisted from the database.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- The 'Establishment' year would refer to the year in which a conservation easement was registered on title, or ownership of a fee-simple property was transferred to the land trust.
- The 'Qualifying' year would refer to the year in which the site was entered into the CPCAD, or the year in which a verification process was completed.
- The 'Delisting' year – as noted above – actually refers to the year an area-based conservation project was "terminated." 'Termination' would refer to a conservation easement being removed from a property, or a fee-simple property was transferred to a non-conservation entity, or with a conservation easement in place.

Audit Outcome

The term 'Audit' is undefined and used vaguely in the CPCAD. The only description is:

> "*This could include, for example, whether the site clearly qualifies as a PA or OECM, whether weaknesses were found and are expected to remain, whether the responsible data provider has committed to address identified gaps, or whether the site did not qualify*" (ECCC 2025).

It is clearly not a financial audit, nor a charitable status audit, nor an audit of conservation effectiveness (that is included in the Management Effectiveness Evaluation field).

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- This is an optional field, and has no analogous field in the international database.
- The field is again likely an artefact of public land conservation, where activities of departments are subject to occasional review by an Auditor-General.
- Do not confuse any assessment for 'effectiveness' or 'verification' with this field.
- In general, this field is inapplicable to land trusts' work.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Status of the site	STATUS	An administrative descriptor of the current status of the site.
Establishment / Securement Year Qualifying Year Delisted Year	ESTYEAR QUALYEAR DELISTYEAR	The year a site is variously secured, recognized, and/or delisted.
Audit Outcome Audit Year	AUDITRES AUDITYEAR	The year of a site's most recent audit, and the results of a site's most recent audit.

ToC

Data Provision

Fields related to who is actually providing the data that is going into the CPCAD.

Reporting Jurisdiction Identification Number

Initially, CPCAD only accepted data provided by "jurisdictions", meaning federal, provincial or territorial government agencies. Eventually that was extended to empowered Reporting Authorities[11], and now any Governance Authority can submit their area-based conservation site directly.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If a land trust does not already have a Reporting Jurisdiction Identification Number, they can work with Environment and Climate Change Canada to create one.

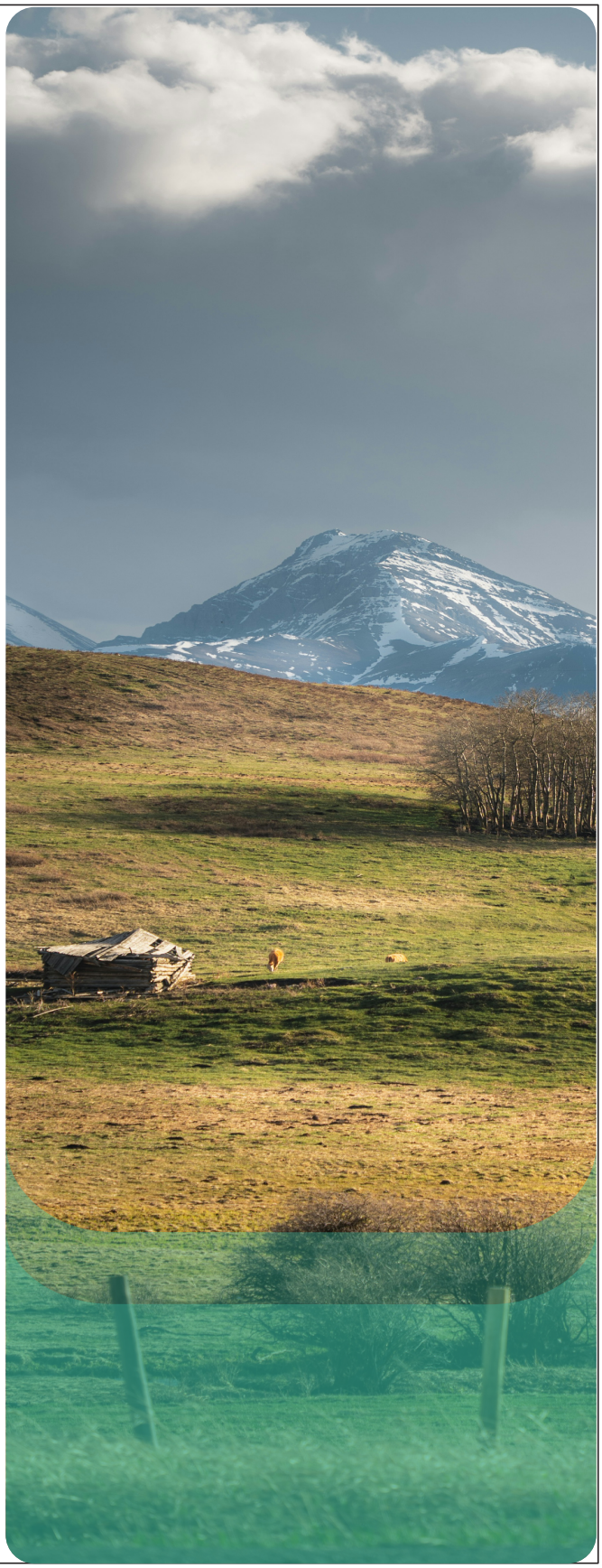
Data Provider

This field indicates who is providing the data to CPCAD, often referred to as the 'Reporting Authority'. A Reporting Authority may be the same as the Governance or Management Authorities, as those are the entities with an ownership stake in the data, but it may also refer to an entity who has been authorized by those parties to provide the data on their behalf.

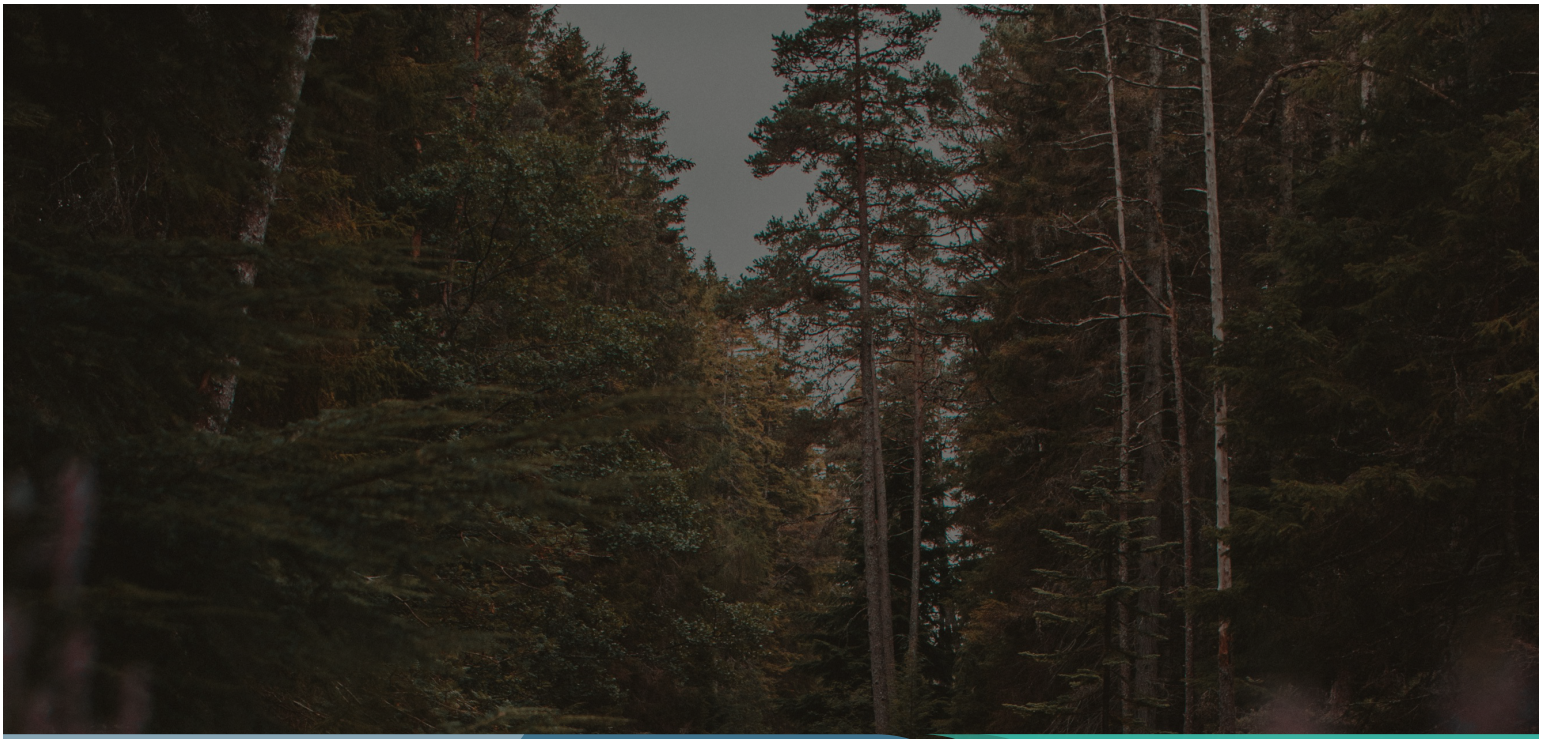
Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- A land trust will need to be added to CPCAD's list of acceptable data providers, and be assigned a number for this field.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Reporting Jurisdiction Identification Number	JUR_ID	An internally-used number to identify the data provider.
Data Provider	PROVIDER	A number referencing a pre-set list of acceptable CPCAD data providers.



11 Reporting Authorities are those entities deemed by the database managers to have the authority to report data into the database.



CHAPTER 3

World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)



World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)

Overview

Background

The World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA) is a joint effort of the *United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre* (UNEP-WCMC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN's) World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). The *Protected Areas Programme* of UNEP-WCMC manages the database on behalf of the partners (UNEP-WCMC and IUCN 2024, 2025a, 2025b).

The database was created to be a repository of Protected Areas data, but also to establish data standards, ensure adherence to the IUCN's conception of a protected area, allowing data users around the world to compare "apples to apples", and help track progress on the variety of goals to which Protected Area designations contribute.

The initial database only tracked Protected Areas, and when Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) appeared on the scene, the response was to create the *World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures* (UNEP-WCMC and IUCN 2026).Subsequently, in October of 2025, UNEP-WCMC announced the development of an integrated *World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas* (WDPCA). The modified database will now house Protected Areas and OECMs under one roof (UNEP-WCMC 2025).

Fields

The WDPCA database has forty fields that must be completed for each area-based conservation project submitted (as well as 23 'Source Table' metadata fields), not all of which are mandatory, and not all of which are applicable to Canada's land trusts. Each field must be filled in according to specific parameters laid out by the database. Some fields are generated by the database manager, some are optional, and many have specific data-type requirements.

Appendix 10: World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas Field List contains the entire list of fields for the WDPCA.

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Guidance

The managers of the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas have created an excellent User Manual (UNEP-WCMC 2019), which outlines everything from the history of the database, protected areas vs OECMs, data standards, data provision and verification, access and use, details on each field in the data schema, and appendices for data agreements and quality checks.

Subsequent work by the IUCN Specialist Groups and others regarding OECMs and Privately Protected Areas has also been extremely helpful, especially for the unique questions which Canadian land trusts might have. These include the following:

- *User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas and world database on other effective area-based conservation measures: 1.6.* (UNEP-WCMC. 2019) http://wcmc.io/WDPA_Manual
- *The Protected Planet Initiative*. UNEP-WCMC and IUCN. 2025) https://www.protectedplanet.net/en/about
- *Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures* (IUCN-WCPA Task Force on OECMs 2019) https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/PATRS-003-En.pdf
- *How to submit data for sites under private governance: Guidance for private actors* (UNEP-WCMC. 2025) https://wcmc.io/Guidance_for_private_actors
- *Privately protected areas: international reporting and their relationship with OECMs*, (Bingham et al 2020) https://iucn.org/resources/other-brief/iucn-wcpa-technical-note-1-privately-protected-areas-international-reporting

The two (pervasive) challenges are the limited direction for Privately Protected Areas and OECMs, as well as the tendency to group for-profit and not-for-profit bodies as 'private' entities.

Submission

Submissions are made to the managers of the database, the *United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre* (UNEP-WCMC). These submissions can only be made "by the entity with the intellectual property (IP) rights in the data" (UNEP-WCMC 2019). For fee-simple properties and

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conservation easements, this is the land trust, though with conservation easements, there may be some shared data rights. The database managers are adamant that " Only one version of any protected area or OECM is stored in the databases," meaning if a land trust submits directly, no government agency can also be submitting on their behalf.

Each submission must contains the following three items:

- "**Spatial data and associated attributes**: either a polygon boundary or the central latitude and longitude point for each protected area or OECM.
- **The Source Table** must be completed to identify who provided the data, and any basic details on the quality and currency of the data at the time it was provided.
- The **WDPA Data Contributor Agreement** must be signed." (UNEP-WCMC 2019)

First-time submitters are sent a 'Data Submission Pack' with templates and guidance documents.

(the full text of the data submission agreement can be found in Appendix 11: Data Submission Agreement for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA))

Submissions and updates can be made any time, but once a submitter is 'in their system' the database managers seek to reach out on a regular basis (with a target minimum of every 5 years).

The entire submission process is detailed in the *User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas and world database on other effective area-based conservation measures* (UNEP-WCMC 2019). The current version (1.6) is from 2019, and as such has some limitations regarding the 2025 decision to merge the Protected Areas database and the OECM database. Land trusts should look for the most up-to-date version at: http://wcmc.io/WDPA_Manual.

Verification

All data being submitted to the WDPCA must be 'verified', which the database managers describe as follows:

> "*The role of data verifiers is to confirm that, to the best of their knowledge, the data provider has submitted correct information. They will also be asked to raise any concerns they have relating to data accuracy and to the process by which the data have been collected (including issues of free, prior and informed consent)*" (UNEP-WCMC 2019).

This process offers no prescribed verification guidelines, and the database managers note that the verification process is new and evolving. However, it can be assumed that the assessment is based on ensuring the proposed area-based conservation site meets all of the requirements of a Protected Area of OECM (see the companion document to this one, *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts* for details on how that applies to land trusts' projects).

The database record will subsequently have 'State Verified' or 'Expert Verified' based on the option chosen by the data submitter.

(see Appendix 12: Data Verification for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA), for more details on the verification process, and WDPCA Submission Guidance for Land Trusts | Verification, below, for how this is represented in the database fields).

Privacy and Data Sharing

For land trusts, privacy and data sharing with regard to WDPCA has two dynamics: sharing data with the database, and how data is shared by the database.

Sharing Data with WDPCA

Land trusts need to be conscious of what data they are sharing with WDPCA and how they are sharing it, especially in the case of conservation easements. WDPCA requires that reporting authorities provide digital mapping files that delineate the boundaries of the each area-based conservation project, and some personal/organizational data.

The database is adamant that submitters only share data to which they are legally entitled. For conservation easements, this means land trusts must secure permission before sharing the name of the Management Authority (i.e., the landowner),.

Digital or other data used in the development of a project may be subject to data-sharing agreements, in which case land trusts need to ensure they are following those restrictions or obtaining the necessary permissions. This may also include clauses in the conservation easement agreements relating to the sharing of data.

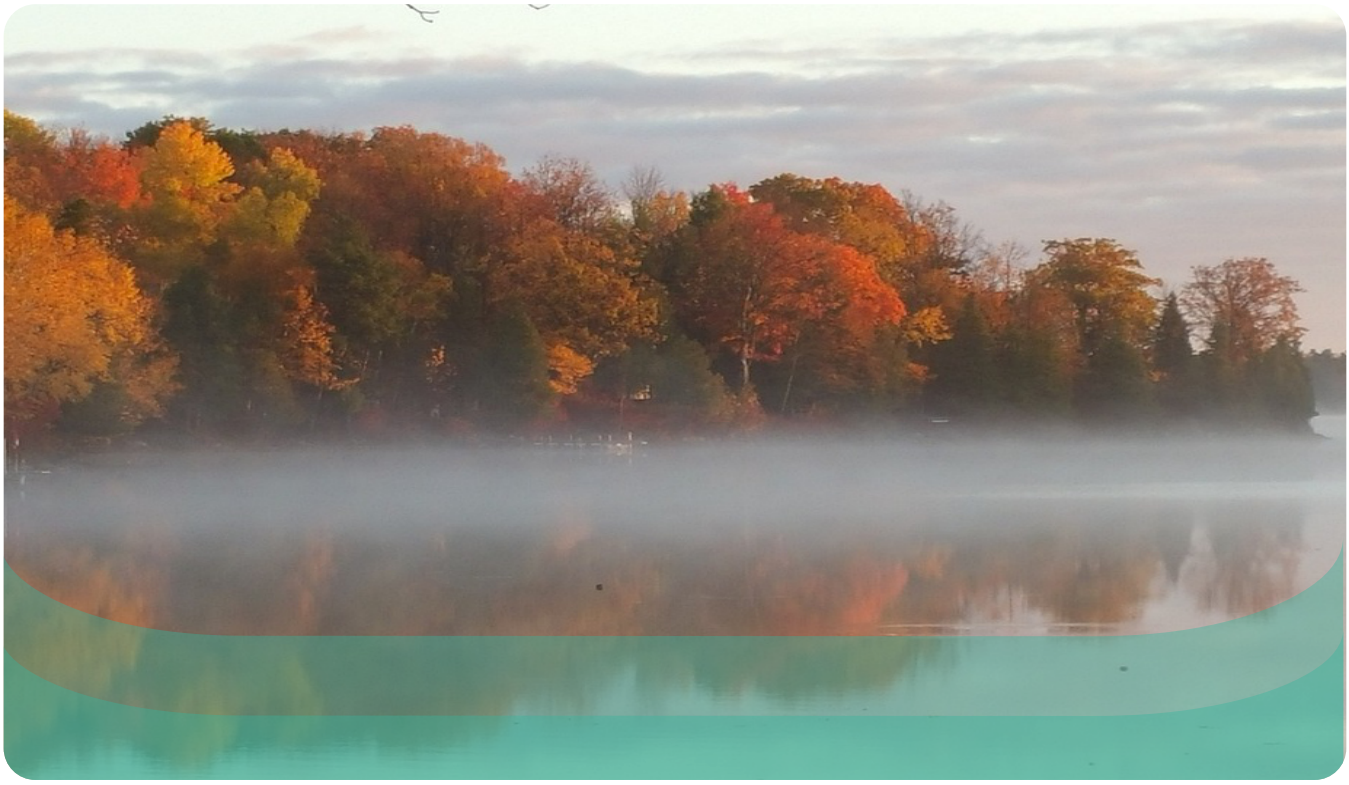
Even naming conventions should be scrutinized to ensure they are not oversharing. For example, "The John Smith" property may inadvertently be sharing personal data.

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Data Sharing by WDPCA

Data within the WDPCA is intended to be shared widely – that is the point of it. It is actively used by NGOs, private sector organizations and international bodies, and others from across the globe. It is also specifically used to report on global programs and associated targets, including the UN List of Protected Areas, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), CBD Global Biodiversity Outlook, and UN Environment Global Environment Outlook Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

To facilitate this, the database is made available on the Protected Planet website (www.protectedplanet.net), where any user can download the data, or view it using a built in web viewer. The only constraints is data cannot be used for commercial or revenue-generating purposes. As well, fields relating to personal information (names, addresses, contact information) are not shared by the database managers.

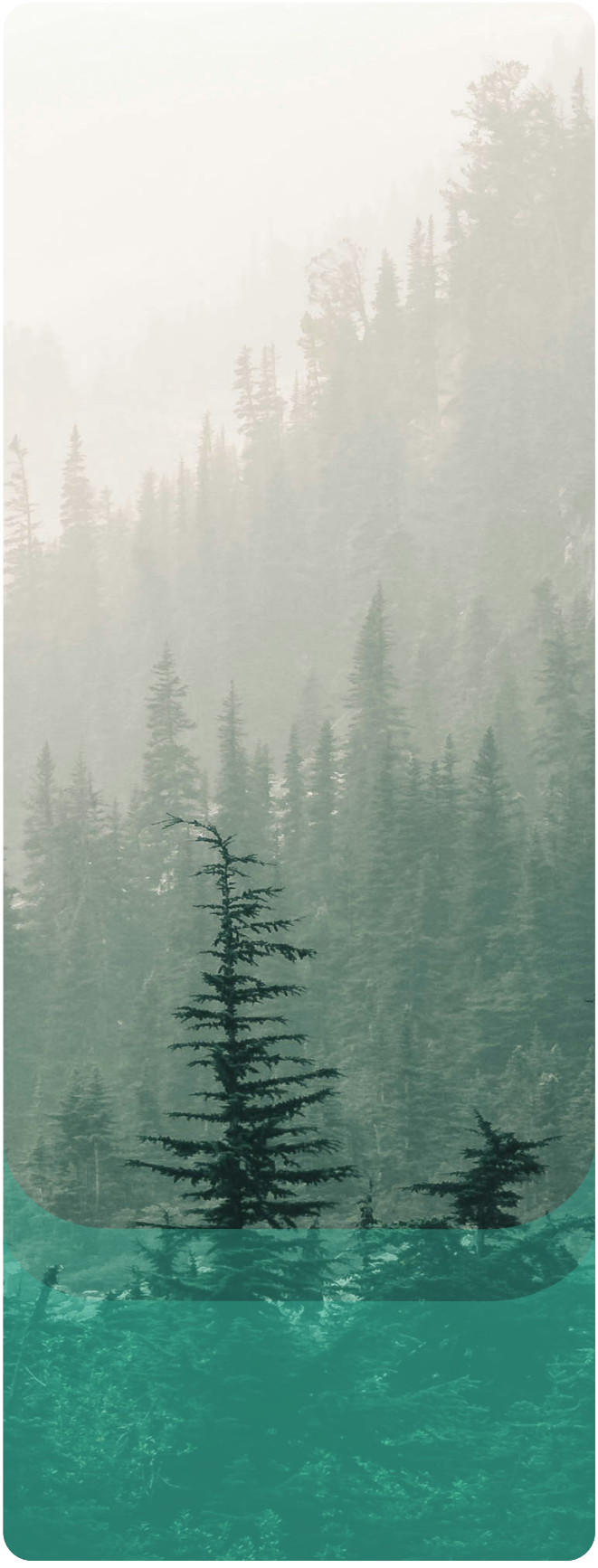


WDPCA Submission Guidance[12] for Land Trusts

The focus of this guidance is on those Fields which the Reporting Authority (i.e., the land trust) must provide, and especially those that require some guidance to navigate.

To make it easier to understand, this document gathers the fields into logical groupings (though they may not appear in that order in the database). For each of those groupings, this Guidebook provides a summary of the fields themselves and what needs to be included, as well as reporting guidance specific to land trusts.

The Appendices include the entire list of fields for WDPCA, with more detail on data controls, minimums, etc. for each field (see *Appendix 10: World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas Field List*).



12 The decision to merge the World Database on Protected Areas and the World Database on OECMs was only recently made (UNEP-WCMC 2025). The associated guidance, therefore, still has some vestigial references to the old structure, which may be mirrored in this document.

ToC

Names, IDs and Zones

Fields that relate to the way the Governance Authority names and – potentially – separates a fee-simple property or conservation easement into zones for more specific management objectives.

IDs

These are unique identifiers chosen by the database managers. No action is required by the Reporting Authority.

Names

The Governance Authority chooses the name they wish the area-based conservation project to be known by. It must be a name using Latin characters, but if the original name uses non-Latin characters, the 'original' name can be included provided it is supported by UTF 8 encoding.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If the area is a conservation easement, avoid using the name of the landowner in the title for the sake of their privacy.

Zones

A land trust's fee-simple property or conservation easement may be divided into different areas based on ecological characteristics, management requirements, etc. The WDPCA accounts for this by assigning an ID to both the larger parent areas, as well as each 'parcel' or 'zone.'

This means:

- The entire area is given a unique ID in the database (WPDA_ID).
- That are may be broken into 'Zones', each of which has a unique Parcel ID (WPDA_PID) but the same WDPA ID Number.
- Each Parcel ID becomes a separate record in the database.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If all sub-areas of the property or easement (i.e., zones or 'Parcels') have essentially the same character with regard to its conservation contribution, there is no need to divide them for the database.
- If the management plan associated with the property makes stark distinctions of sub-areas based on significantly different management approaches, these should be assessed as to whether they constitute different Parcels or zones.
- If an area within the PPA or private OECM has been explicitly excluded from management for conservation (e.g., a future housing envelope, a day-tripper parking lot, a concentration of agricultural infrastructure) these areas should not be reported as part of the parent conservation area, and therefore not as a parcel or zone.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
WDPA Identification Number	WDPA_ID	A unique numeric identifier generated by the database managers for each area-based conservation project.
WDPA Parcel Identification Number	WDPA_PID	In the cases where a site is divided into zones, each will have the same WDPA_ ID, but a unique 'parcel' ID.
Site Name	NAME ORIG_ NAME	Name of the protected area (PA) or OECM as provided by the data provider.

Geography

ToC

Fields that relate to the size and location of the area-based conservation project.

Areal Measure

The Reporting Authority must give a numeric value (in sq. km.) of the Privately Protected Area or OECM (a.k.a. Conserved Area), including all terrestrial, freshwater, and marine portions. They must also give a numeric value in sq. km. of just the marine area (if applicable).

The database managers will also calculate these areas based on the spatial data polygon provided by the Reporting Authority.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- If the area is divided into zones, this measure would be for each zone or 'parcel'.
- If the provided areal measures do not match the area of the polygons provided, the database managers will reach out to address the inconsistencies.

Location

The Location is simply the country, and then the province/territory where the private land conservation project exists.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

The National Location Code will be "CAN"

- The Sub-National Location Code references the province or territory (see Appendix 13: ISO Sub-National Code (Provinces and Territories for a list of those codes).
- If the area is divided across a provincial/territorial border, this should be accounted for in the reporting of projects with 'zones' or 'parcels', ensuring there is congruence between those boundaries and the provincial/territorial separation.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Reported Area (sq km)	REP_AREA	Total PA or OECM extent (including terrestrial, freshwater, and marine) reported in square kilometres by the data provider.
GIS Area (sq km)	GIS_AREA	This area calculated by the database managers using the submitted GIS polygon.
Reported Marine Area (sq km)	REP_M__ AREA	Total PA or OECM extent that falls within the marine environment reported in square kilometres by the data provider.
GIS Marine Area (sq km)	GIS_M_AREA	This area calculated by the database managers using the submitted GIS polygon.
National Location Code (ISO)	PARENT_ISO3	International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) Alpha-3 code for the country; Canada's is "CAN"
Sub-National Location Code (ISO)	SUB_LOC	International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) subnational code; for Canada, these refer to the province or territory.

ToC

Designation

Fields that relate to the designation and recognition of the area-based conservation project.

Protected Area Definition

The WDPCA now includes both Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), and the Governance Authority must indicate which designation applies to their area-based conservation project.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- While not needed for submission to the database, a justification for the choice between PPA and a private OECM should be created based on the IUCN guidance, and then kept by the Governance Authority in case of any audit of the database contents.
- For guidance on how a land trust can make this determination in the context of the protected and conserved area databases, see *Appendix 4: Protected Area or OECM*.
- For a full guide to assessing all facets an area-based conservation project (Privately Protected Area or OECM) against the IUCN definitions, land trusts should see *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*[13] .
- The 'Supplemental Information' field can contain a link to this rationale for OECMs, but can also just be 'Not Reported'.

Conservation Objectives

For WDPCA, the Conservation Objectives field does not house the conservation objectives. Rather this is a field stating whether the conservation objectives for an OECM are primary, secondary, or tertiary.

In effect, this digs one level further down after identifying an area-based conservation project as an OECM, above, under *Designation Type*.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- This field only applies to area-based conservation projects which are being submitted as private OECMs (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures).
- This field can be confusing because the distinguishing characteristic between Protected Areas and OECMs is the primacy of biodiversity conservation as a management objective: Protected Areas have this as a 'primary' goal, while OECMs have it as a 'secondary' or 'ancillary' goal[14]. Yet, 'primary conservation' is an option here. This reflects a 'sub-purpose' of the OECM designation which allows Governing Authorities to submit a Protected Area as an OECM if there is strategic value in avoiding the term 'protected area.'
- See *Appendix 5: Identifying or Establishing Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures* for more detail on this distinction.
- See *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*[15] for how a land trust can make the determination of whether their project should be submitted as a Privately Protected Area or a private OECM.

Designation

Confusingly, 'Designation' refers to the type or generic category of the protective mechanism being used, while 'Designation Type' refers the scale at which the project exists (national, regional, or international).

There are specific allowed values for international-level and regional-level area-based conservation designations, but not for any 'national-level' designation (NB: 'Regional' in the context of this database means spanning across multiple nations; all Sub-National projects are listed as 'National').

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- It is entirely up to the Governing Authority (i.e., the land trust) what Designation to give their area-based conservation projects, however the following suggestions are offered:
  - Land trusts reporting fee-simple properties should use a term like 'Private Nature Reserve';
  - Land trusts reporting 'easement in gross' type easements or servitudes should use the term

13 Specifically, see the section *Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions | Protected Area or OECM*.

14 *"While protected areas must have a primary conservation objective, this is not necessary for OECMs. OECMs may be managed for many different objectives but they must deliver effective conservation."* (IUCN WCPA 2019)

15 Specifically see *Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions | Protected Area or OECM*.

'Conservation Easement'[16].

- The Designation Type for all land trust projects in Canada would be 'National', unless they stretch into another country.

IUCN Protected Area Management Category

To facilitate a more synchronized approach internationally to terminology, management approaches, and evaluation associated with protected areas, the IUCN articulated six (6) protected area management categories (Dudley 2008). The WDPCA requires this field for protected areas (but not OECMs). Because these categories are focused on *management* approach and not related to *governance* type, they are applicable to Privately Protected Areas.

The application of these categories is most applicable to publicly-protected areas at the national level, but they were developed comprehensively, and all of the categories apply to Privately Protected Areas. There is a tendency to default to one category for private land conservation (Category IV), but that is not always the most appropriate choice.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- This field is only for PPAs and not private OECMs. If a land trust has determined their area-based conservation project is an OECM, they should enter "Not applicable"
- Any of the categories could apply to a Privately Protected Area (Dudley 2008), however Categories Ia, III, IV, V, and VI are the most likely matches.
- See *Appendix 6: IUCN Protected Area Management Categories*, for descriptions of the categories, and more detailed guidance

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Protected Area Definition	PA_DEF	Declaration of whether this is a Protected Area (PA) or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure (OECM)
Supplementary Information	SUPP_INFO	[Applies only to an OECM] Link or reference for supporting information on how site fulfils each element of the OECM definition.
Conservation Objectives	CONS_OBJ	[Applies only to an OECM] Statement of whether the conservation objectives are 'primary', secondary, or 'ancillary.'
Designation	DESIG DESIG_ENG	The 'kind' of designation being employed, in both English and the native language.
Designation Type	DESIG_TYPE	The scale at which the designation was applied (international, regional, or national).
IUCN Protected Area Management Category	IUCN_CAT	[For Protected Areas] Identification of which of the 6 IUCN management categories relates best to the area.
Marine	MARINE	Indication of whether the area-based conservation project is partially, entirely, or not at all in the marine environment.
International Criteria	INT_CRIT	[applicable only to World Heritage Sites and Ramsar Sites]

16 *Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions | Protected Area or OECM | Appendix 3: Servitudes, Covenants, and Easements* provides the detail behind this recommendation.

ToC

Ownership and Governance

Fields that relate to the type and identity of the entities who own the property and who are responsible for governance of the area-based conservation.

Governance Type

Governance "refers to who decides what [the] objectives are, what to do to pursue them, and with what means" (Mitchell et al 2018). Governance *Type* captures the kind of entity that Governing Authority is.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- For the most part, the Governance Type for land trust projects will be 'Non-profit organizations'.
- With a conservation easement, while the 'Owner' and the 'Manager' is most often the landowner, the Governing Authority is the holder of the easement, as that is where the governance-level direction with regard to the protective device sits. In these cases, therefore, the Type is generally 'Non-profit Organizations.'
- See *Appendix 8: Describing Governance, Ownership, and Management*, for details on the 'Governance Types' applicable to land trusts' area-based conservation projects.

Ownership

This field captures the 'Type' of ownership of the property submitted as an area-based conservation site.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- For fee-simple properties, in general, the land trust is the owner, and the ownership *Type* is 'Non-profit Organizations'.
- For conservation easements, in general, the landowner is the owner, and the Type is 'Individual Landowners.'
- With conservation easements, land trusts need to be careful regarding sharing the information of private individuals. For these cases, rather than entering the landowner's name, it is recommended that land trusts simply enter 'Private Landowner.'
- See *Appendix 8: Describing Governance, Ownership, and Management*, for details on the 'Ownership Types' applicable to land trusts' area-based conservation projects.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Governance Type	GOV_TYPE	The governance type describes the entity responsible and accountable for making decisions about how a protected area or OECM is managed.
Ownership Type	OWN_TYPE	Ownership type relates to the individual, organization or group that holds legal ownership of the land or waters under management.



ToC

Management

Fields related to the entity responsible for carrying out the land management activities in alignment with the governing authority's objectives.

Managing Authority

Field related to the entity responsible for carrying out the land management activities in alignment with the governing authority's objectives.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- For a fee-simple property owned (and managed) by a land trust, the land trust would be the Managing Authority.
- If the land trust has an agreement with another entity to manage the property (e.g., a leaseholder), then this entity is the Managing Authority.
- For a conservation easement, in general, the Managing Authority is the fee-simple landowner, who is bound by the restrictions and prescriptions of the conservation easement.
- For conservation easements and fee-simple ownership where a private individual manages the property, land trusts need to be careful regarding sharing the information of private individuals. For these cases, rather than entering the landowner's name, it is recommended that land trusts simply enter 'Private Landowner' for a conservation easement, and (e.g.) 'Private Leaseholder' for fee-simple properties, as needed.

Management Plan

The Management Plan field is a link or refence for Privately Protected Area's or OECM's management plan or equivalent conservation planning mechanism, if one is in place.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- This field is essentially optional, as 'Not Reported' is an acceptable field.
- For fee-simple properties, Stolton et al (2014) suggest that to satisfy the 'Dedicated' element of a Privately Protected Area requires "Publicly available long-term management plans with indication of dedication to conservation."
- For conservation easements, management plans – if they exist – may also be shared. However, such management plans may be separate from the easement agreement, and regardless will involve the private landowner. Land trusts should secure the permission of the landowner before making them available. Unlike fee-simple properties, where the management plan is needed to demonstrate conservation intent, it is the conservation easement agreement itself that needs to be publicly accessible, rather than any associated management plans.
- Management plans will – hopefully – be created in the spirit of adaptive management, meaning they will be subject to change, so any link to the plan should be responsive to avoid having to update this field on a regular basis.

Marine Resource Use

These fields reference marine areas that are subject to some sort of area-based conservation designation. 'No Take' refers to the management approach being taken in that conserved marine region.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- Unless subject to extremely rare circumstances, land trusts will choose 'Not Applicable' for this field, as ownership of the ocean bed and water is vested in the Crown.
- For the No Take Area field, enter '0'.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Managing Authority	MANG_AUTH	Individual or group that manages the protected area or OECM.
Management Plan	MANG_PLAN	Link or reference to the protected area's or OECM's management plan or equivalent conservation planning mechanism if available.
No Take (for marine areas)	NO_TAKE	For marine area-based conservation projects, the extent of the area that is no-take ('All', 'Part', or 'None').
No-Take Area (for marine areas)	NO_TK AREA	Area of the no-take area in square kilometres.

ToC

Status and Timing

Fields related to the status of the area-based conservation site.

Administrative Status of the Site

The administrative status field was created largely to make two distinctions: between interim/proposed projects and fully-realized projects, and between sites recognized legally/formally and those with no formal recognition.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- Refer to *Appendix 9: 'Status' of Area-based Conservation Sites* for detail on how the status of a land trust's area-based conservation project would be determined.
- In general, properties subject to the "covenants of NGOs" (i.e., conservation easements), and fee-simple properties subject to the "policies of established non-governmental organizations" (i.e., land trusts), should be entered as having "Designated" status.
- Status Year should be the year the site was assigned that status. In the case of fee-simple properties, this would be the year of acquisition; in the case of conservation easements, this would be the year the easement was registered on title.

Time Stamps

The WDPCA tracks the year in which the area-based conservation site was first added to the database, as well, as the year of the most recent update to its data record. These are both maintained in the Source Table[17] rather than the main attribute table.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- None

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Status of the site	STATUS	An administrative descriptor of the current status of the site.
Status Year	STATUS_YR	The year a site was assigned its current status.

Source Table Field	Field Code	Notes
Year	YEAR	The year when the dataset was first submitted to the database.
Update Year	UPDATE_YR	The year in which dataset was last updated in the database.

17 See *Appendix 14: WDPCA Source Table Details*.



Data Provision

Fields related to who is actually providing the data that is going into the CPCAD.

Metadata ID

For information regarding the entity who is providing the data, the WDPCA's database attribute table references a metadata 'Source Table'. The METADATAID field links to the relevant source table.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- The 'data provider' would be the land trust; in other contexts, this may be referred to as the 'Reporting Authority'.
- For details on this table, see Appendix 14: WPDCA Source Table Details.

Source Table Field	Field Code	Notes
Responsible Party	RESP_PARTY	The data provider, i.e. the land trust.
Responsible Party Contact E-mail(s)	RESP_EMAIL	Contact e-mail address of the data provider (land trust). [Not shared publicly]



ToC

Verification

All data going into the WDPCA must be verified to the satisfaction of UNEP-WCMC, the database managers. There are two options. 'State verified' means the state government submitted the data, or vouched for the submitter, in which case no further verification is required. 'Expert' verified means the data were not verified by the state government, but the submitting authority chose to have a third-party expert verify the data.

For the most part, data verification requirements revolve around data quality checks (e.g., attribute completion, source table completion, spatial data error assessment). As described in detail in Appendix 12 (Data Verification for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)), UNEP-WCMC guidance for 'expert verification' for land trusts is currently evolving, contradictory, and poorly targeted.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

- Land trusts should be aware that the WDPCA User Manual (UNEP-WCMC 2019) is adamant that private entities submitting area-based conservation projects may choose 'expert verification' rather than requiring 'government verification'; yet new direction (UNEP-WCMC 2025a) now appears to contradict that.
- Regardless of the contradictory direction, the submission process involves the WDPCA managers working data submitters upfront to help identify issues or inconsistences[18]. In these discussions, land trusts should emphasize:
  - Given that fee-simple area-based conservation projects are considered Privately Protected Areas by the IUCN if subject to "the policies of established non-governmental organizations" (Dudley 2008), and Canadian land trusts must be registered with the federal government as charities with a focus on biodiversity, fee-simple properties are arguably 'government verified' for the purposes of the WDPCA.
  - Given that conservation easement are-based conservation projects are only available by way of specific enabling provincial/territorial government legislation, and only available to be held by NGOs that are deemed eligible by the provincial/territorial government to hold them, conservation easements are arguably 'government verified' for the purposes of the WDPCA.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Verification	VERIF	The type of entity that verified the data; either 'state' or 'expert'.

Source Table Field	Field Code	Notes
Verifying Party	VERIFIER	The organisation, national government or other actor that has verified the data.
Verifying Party Contact Email(s)	V_EMAIL	Contact e-mail address of entity responsible for verifying the data. [Not shared publicly].



18 Land trusts reporting directly to the WDPCA can contact the UNEP-WCMC at protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org for the latest process procedures and updates.

ToC

Privacy and Data Sharing

The WDPCA is intended to be shared widely, including both the underlying data, and the geospatial shapefiles. To facilitate that, it is made available via the Protected Planet web site (www.protectedplanet.net), and the associated web viewer.

Despite that, there is a commitment – and mechanisms – to withhold private information, as well as opportunities to request certain data be restricted.

Reporting Considerations for Private Land Conservation:

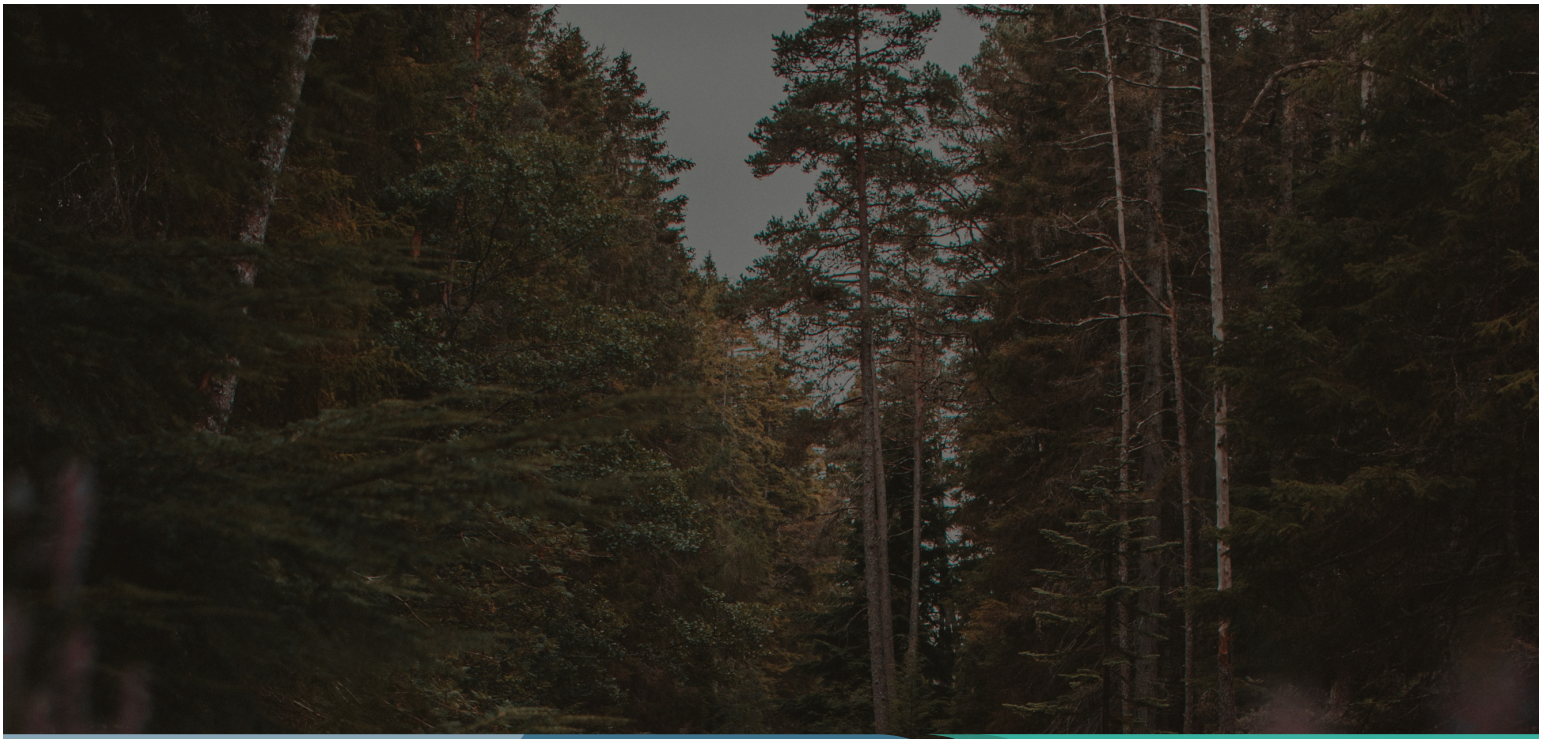
- All personal data, including names and emails, are not shared by the database managers.
- The 'Data Contributor Agreement'[19] makes it clear that the default intent is for unrestricted sharing:
  - "Unless otherwise stated, this dataset is being provided 'free of restrictions'. We, the undersigned, agree and understand that by providing data for inclusion in the WDPA it will be viewable and downloadable in accordance with the WDPA Terms and Conditions through websites operated by UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, utilised for analyses, and re-distributed to third parties for use on other platforms." (UNEP-WCMC 2019)
- However, it also allows that there can be exceptions:
  - "UNEP-WCMC may accept data with restrictions. This includes data that is available for onward release but not for commercial use ("commercial use" means a) any use by, on behalf of, or to inform or assist the activities of, a commercial entity (an entity that operates 'for profit') or b) use by any individual or non-profit entity for the purposes of revenue generation), and data that is made available only to UNEP-WCMC, UN Environment and IUCN, and is not for onward release. If you wish to place restrictions on data, or require further information, please contact protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org." (UNEP-WCMC 2019)
- Land trusts wishing to restrict some data should reach out as indicated to the database managers, and be prepared to make the case as to why certain data should be restricted.

Database Field	Field Code	Notes
Restricted Data	RESTRICT	Not publicly available, for UNEP-WCMC use only.

Source Table Field	Field Code	Notes
Disclaimer	DISCLAIMER	Warnings/exceptions to use of the data. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.



19 The Data Contributor Agreement can be viewed in its entirety in *Appendix 11: Data Submission Agreement for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)*



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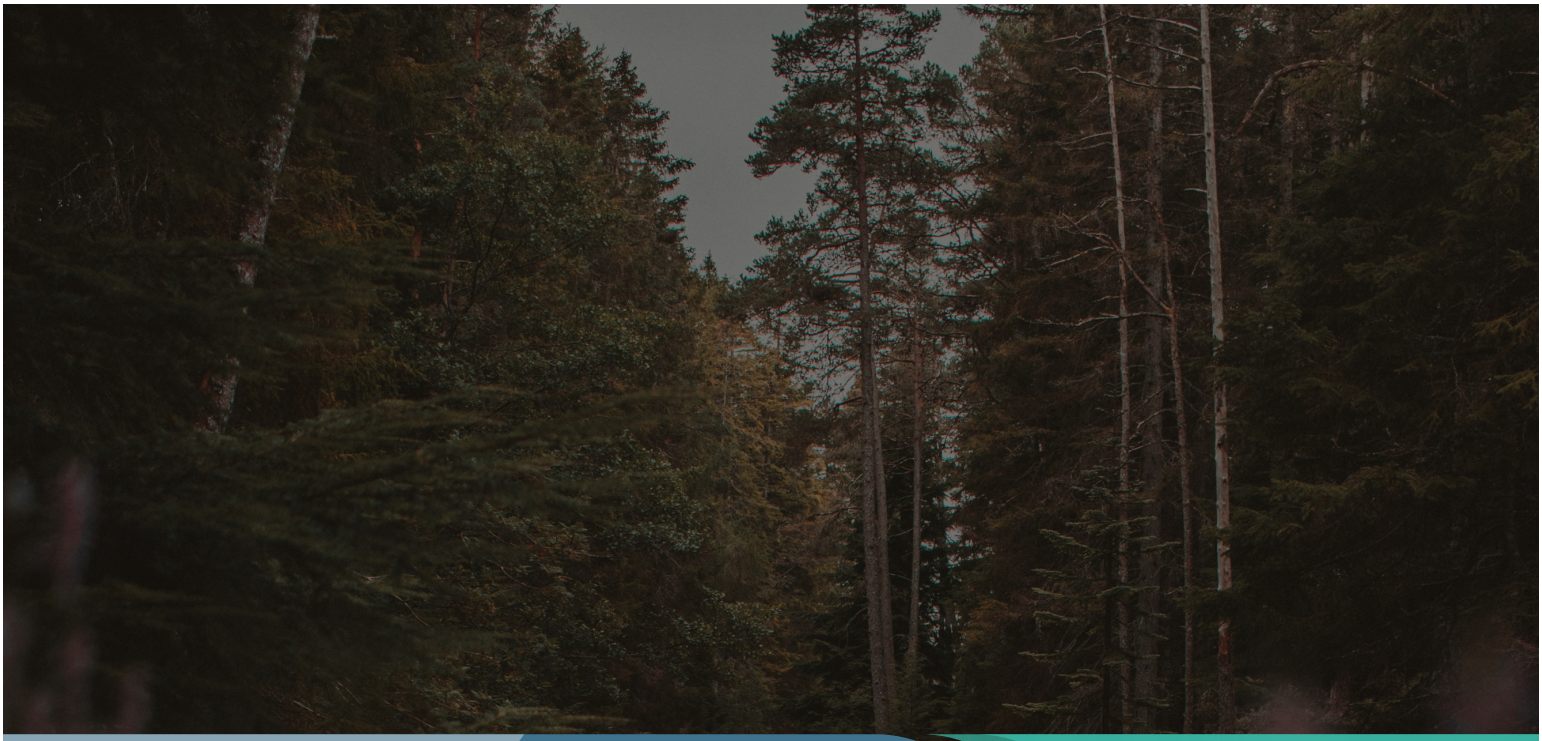
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APPENDIX 1

Terminology



Terminology

ToC

Area-based Conservation

Amongst the various approaches that can help ensure the planet's natural systems thrive and persist, is 'Area-based Conservation' where a geographic area is identified and specific enduring measures put in place to safeguard the area's natural features and systems. The Convention on Biological Diversity has identified two categories of 'area-based conservation', first in their 2010-2020 strategic plan (CBD 2010), and again in their 2020-2030 plan (CBD 2022):

> "*... are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of* ***protected areas*** *and* ***other effective area-based conservation measures*** *....*" (CBD 2010)

Area-based Conservation Projects

'Area-based Conservation Projects' refer to specific area-based conservation efforts which may be Protected Areas (PAs) or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure (OECMs). For private land conservation charities (i.e., land trusts), these would largely be fee-simple acquisitions or securement of conservation easements.

Conservation Easement

In this report, the term Conservation Easement is used to refer to legislatively-enabled private-property easements and covenants that apply positive and/or negative requirements on a the owner of a property in favour of protecting the identified conservation values of a property. Canadian provincial and territorial law enabling this tool may refer to these as Conservation Easements, Conservation Covenants, and/or Conservation Agreements.

Conserved Area

'Conserved Area' is a common colloquial shorthand for an Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure (OECM).

Governance Authority

The term 'governance authority' refers to the entity responsible for decision-making at the level of the protected area or OECM. In the case of PPAs and privately governed OECMs, this may be an individual landowner, non-profit organisation or for-profit organisation (Bingham et al 2020).

***In Situ* Biodiversity**

The Convention on Biological Diversity defines 'in situ conservation' as:

"The conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings and, in the case of domesticated or cultivated species, in the surroundings where they have developed their distinctive properties." (CBD2011)

Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure

An Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure is an area-based conservation project that meets the IUCN definition of an OECM.

> "*Other effective area-based conservation measure" means "a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity,' with associated ecosystem functions and services and, where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic, and other locally relevant values.*" (CBD 2018)

Private OECM (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure)

A Private Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure (P-OECM) is an area-based conservation project that meets the IUCN definition of an OECM, AND whose governance type is Private Governance.

Privately Protected Area

A Privately Protected Area is an area-based conservation project that meets the IUCN definition of a Protected Area, AND whose governance type is Private Governance. Private Governance is defined by the IUCN as:

> "*individuals and groups of individuals; non-governmental organisations; corporations – both existing commercial companies and sometimes corporations set up by groups of private owners to manage groups of PPAs; for-profit owners; research entities or religious entities.*" (WCC 2016)

Protected Area

A Protected Area is an area-based conservation project that meets the IUCN definition of a Protected Area:

> "*A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural value*." (Dudley 2008)

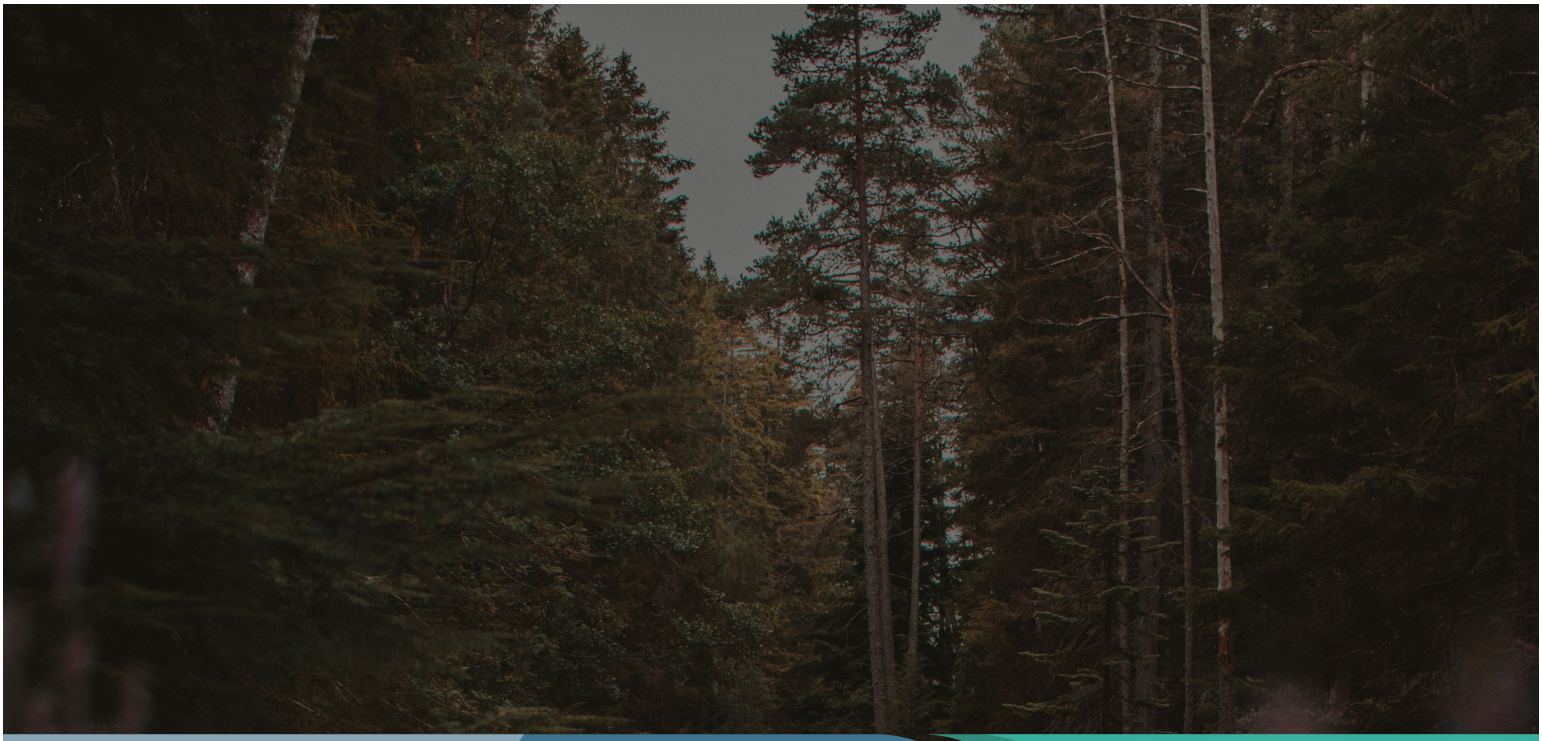
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Reporting Authority / Data Provider

'Reporting Authority' is a term/concept carried over from the original form of the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) process, where all submissions had to go through a provincial/territorial government or one of a few specifically-authorized entities. This is no longer the case, as any Governance Authority can now report directly int the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database.

'Data Provider' is the actual field in the database referring to the entity providing the data. The Data Provider must be, or be authorized by, the Governance Authority.





APPENDIX 2

Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Field List



Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Field List

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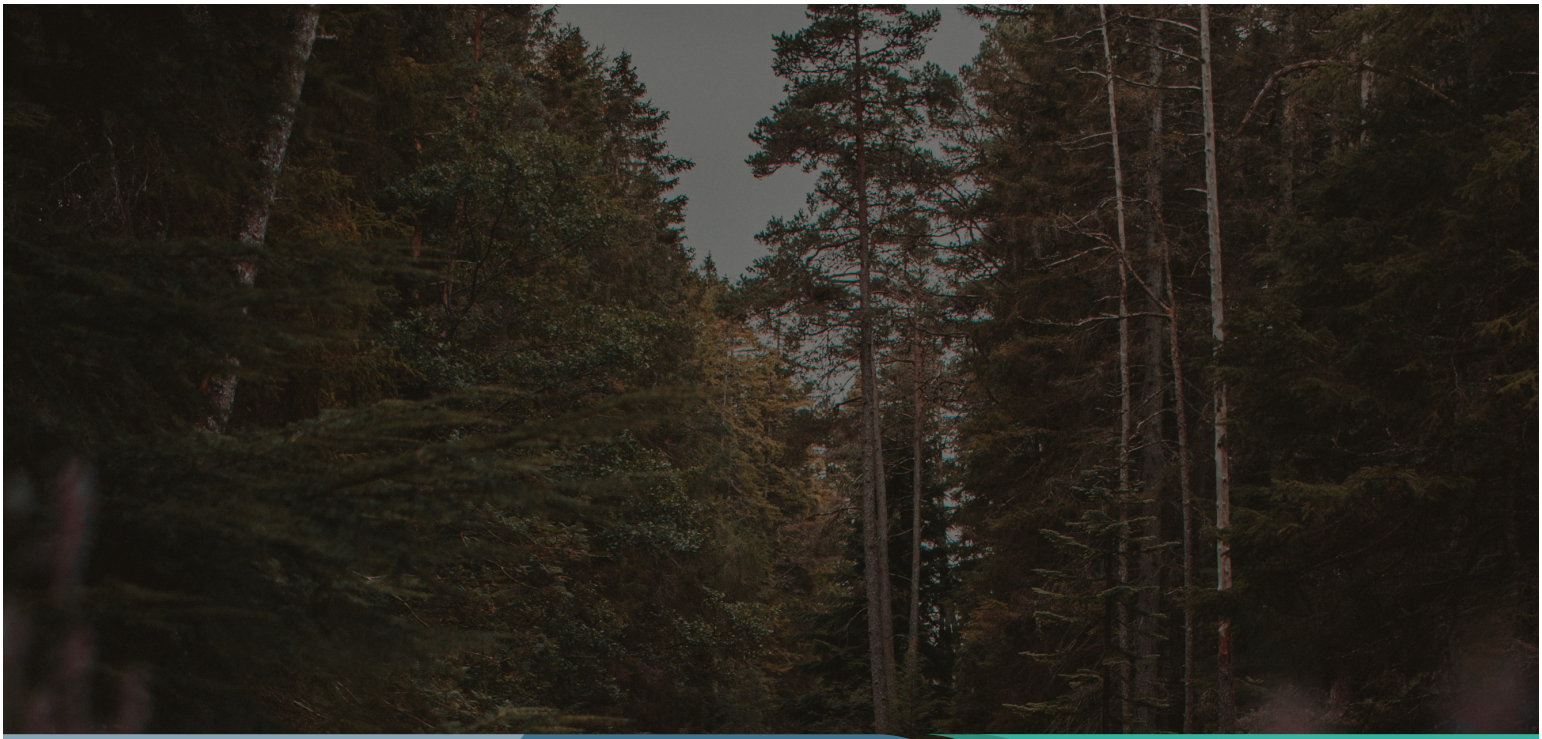
Field	Alias EN	Optional	Description EN
PARENT_ID	Parent Identification Number	No	The Parent Identification Number is a value unique to each reported Protected Area or OECM in CPCAD. Values are identical for all zones within a parent area.
NAME_E	Name – English	No	The name of the Protected Area or OECM in English (when available).
NAME_F	Name – French	No	The name of the Protected Area or OECM in French (when available).
NAME_IND	Name – Indigenous Languages	Yes	The name of the Protected Area or OECM in Indigenous language (when available).
ZONE_ID	Zone Identification Number	No	The Zone Identification Number is a unique number for each record in the CPCAD database.
ZONEDESC_E	Zone Description – English	Yes	A text description of the attributes and factors that required the delineation of a zone in English.
ZONEDESC_F	Zone Description – French	Yes	A text description of the attributes and factors that required the delineation of a zone in French.
BIOME	Biome	No	The biome type that the Protected Area or OECM falls within.
JUR_ID	Reporting Jurisdiction Identification Number	Yes	The identification number used internally by the Data Provider reporting the Protected Area or OECM.
PA_OECM_DF	PA / OECM Definition	No	The site's conserved area type.
IUCN_CAT	IUCN Protected Area Management Category	No	The IUCN Management Category assigned to a site based on the international standard for reporting on the level of protection for biodiversity.
IPCA	Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area	Yes	A description of whether a Protected Area or OECM is also recognized as an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area.
IND_TERM	Indigenous-led Conservation Terminology	Yes	The preferred terminology for Indigenous-led conservation efforts, as requested by relevant Indigenous governing authorities.
O_AREA_HA	Official Area (ha)	No	The Official Area is the total Protected Area or OECM extent in hectares (ha) provided by the Data Provider.

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Field	Alias EN	Optional	Description EN
LOC	Location	No	The province or territory where the Protected Area or OECM is located.
MECH_E	Enabling Mechanisms – English	No	The main legal or other mechanisms qualifying an area as a Protected Area or OECM in English (when translation available).
MECH_F	Enabling Mechanisms – French	No	The main legal or other mechanisms qualifying an area as a Protected Area or OECM in French (when translation available).
TYPE_E	Designation Type – English	No	The designation (legal or otherwise) of a Protected Area or OECM in English (when translation available).
TYPE_F	Designation Type – French	No	The designation (legal or otherwise) of a Protected Area or OECM in French (when translation available).
OWNER_TYPE	Ownership Type	No	A description of the type of individual, organization or group that holds legal ownership of the land or waters under management.
OWNER_E	Owner – English	No	An identification of the agencies, organizations, and/or individuals that hold legal or customary ownership or tenure of the land under management in English (when translation available).
OWNER_F	Owner – French	No	An identification of the agencies, organizations, and/or individuals that hold legal or customary ownership or tenure of the land under management in French (when translation available).
GOV_TYPE	Governance Type	No	A description of the entity responsible and accountable for making decisions about how a Protected Area or OECM is managed.
MGMT_E	Managing Authority – English	No	The agency, organization, individual, or group that manage the Protected Area or OECM in English (when translation available).
MGMT_F	Managing Authority – French	No	The agency, organization, individual, or group that manage the Protected Area or OECM in French (when translation available).
STATUS	Status	No	A description of the current state of protection of each Protected Area or OECM
ESTYEAR	Establishment / Securement Year	Yes	The year in which the area was established/ secured under its principal purpose.
DELISTYEAR	Delisted Year	Yes	The year of the termination of a Protected Area or OECM.

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Field	Alias EN	Optional	Description EN
SUBSRIGHT	Subsurface Right Status	Yes	Information on a subset of approaches to ensuring subsurface rights do not affect in situ conservation of biodiversity.
CONS_OBJ	Conservation Objectives	No	An indication of whether an OECM is managed with biodiversity conservation as a primary objective, secondary objective, or without conservation as an explicit objective
NO_TAKE	Marine Resource Use	No	The condition of an area through which the taking of living or dead natural resources, inclusive of all methods of fishing, extraction, dumping, dredging and construction, is strictly prohibited in all or part of a marine Protected Area or OECM.
NO_TAKE_HA	No Take Area (ha)	No	The area of no-take in a marine Protected Area or OECM, in hectares.
MPLAN	Management Plan	Yes	A description of whether or not a site has a management plan or equivalent conservation planning mechanism.
MPLAN_REF	Management Plan Reference	Yes	The URL link or citation if a site has a management plan or equivalent conservation planning mechanism in place.
M_EFF	Management Effectiveness Evaluation	Yes	An indication of whether a management effectiveness evaluation has been done on the site.
AUDITYEAR	Audit Year	Yes	The year of a site's most recent audit.
AUDITRES	Audit Outcome	Yes	The results of a site's most recent audit.
PROVIDER	Data Provider	No	The Data Provider who has submitted the data record.



APPENDIX 3

Submission Guidelines for CPCAD



Submission Guidelines for CPCAD

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Submission

Quotes from Canada Conservation (2026) regarding the submission process:

- "A governing authority of lands and inland waters that meet the pan-Canadian standard for protected areas and OECMs can report their areas for inclusion in CPCAD."
- "Non-Crown lands (e.g. privately owned lands, Indigenous owned lands, local government owned lands) can either be reported via a Crown government, an organization that is aggregating the data of others with their permission (e.g. an environmental non-government organization that aggregates and reports local land trust data) or reported directly by the governing authority to ECCC who administers CPCAD."
- "Consent of all landowners (and where appropriate, co-management partners) is required to report, and data sharing agreements must be respected where applicable."
- "Provincial and territorial governments are both governing authorities and data providers that, on request, provide data annually to ECCC for inclusion in CPCAD."
- "When a governing authority may be less familiar with protected areas and OECMs, the province or territory may request to collaborate in the early stages of site assessment and data submission to assist them in ensuring that they understand the pan-Canadian definitions, guidance, and tools as well as the information required to submit an area for inclusion in CPCAD. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the governing authority to determine if their area meets the pan-Canadian definition of a protected area or OECM and decide whether to have it included in CPCAD."
- "This means that Indigenous governments, organizations, communities, individuals or other Indigenous partners; land trusts; local governments; private landowners (organizations or individuals); etc., can have lands and waters recognized as part of the pan-Canadian network of protected and conserved areas through inclusion in CPCAD if they are the governing authority or have the governing authority's permission to report.
- "Governing authorities can report their lands via a Crown government, an organization that is aggregating the data of others with their permission (e.g. an environmental non-government organization that aggregates and reports local land trust data), or directly to ECCC who administers CPCAD.
- "Submission support is available from ECCC and relevant provincial and territorial partners."
- "A data-provider must provide the following for an area to be added to CPCAD:
  - the geospatial polygons that delineate the boundaries of the area. Support to develop this is available if required.
  - a completed geospatial schema for each of the polygons (minimum: all mandatory fields are filled), using the CPCAD user manual for field descriptions and criteria."

Verification

Quotes from Canada Conservation (2026) regarding the verification process:

- "All efforts should be made to uphold the integrity of areas in CPCAD."
- "These governments may also assist others within their province or territory in assessing their lands, developing the necessary data for inclusion in CPCAD, and reporting non-Crown protected areas and OECMs."
- "Consent of all landowners (and where appropriate, co-management partners) is required to report, and data sharing agreements must be respected where applicable."
- "When a governing authority and potential data provider may be less familiar with the pan-Canadian tools, ECCC [Environment and Climate Change Canada] may request to collaborate in the early stages of site assessment and data submission to assist them in understanding the pan-Canadian definitions, guidance, and tools as well as the information required to submit an area for inclusion in CPCAD."
- "However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the governing authority to determine if their area meets the pan-Canadian definition of a protected area or OECM and decide whether to have it included in CPCAD."
- "Provincial and territorial governments work with

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pan-Canadian definitions and tools to support assessment as to what qualifies as a protected area or OECM and what should be reported for inclusion in CPCAD in their jurisdiction."

- "How is it determined whether an area is a protected area or OECM and thus eligible to be included in CPCAD?"
  - It is the responsibility of the governing authority to determine if an area is a protected area or an OECM and thus eligible to be included in CPCAD. In 2019, federal, provincial and territorial governments endorsed the pan-Canadian definitions for protected areas and OECMs in *One with Nature – A Renewed Approach to Land and Freshwater Conservation in Canada*, followed shortly by the pan-Canadian *Decision Support Tool (DST) For Assessing Areas Against Pan-Canadian Standards for Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMS) for Terrestrial and Inland Waters* and the associated DST template. These pan-Canadian definitions and associated tools provide guidance to Governing Authorities when determining whether or not sites qualify as protected areas or OECMs (including interim areas).
  - Support for understanding and using the DST and associated template is available through provincial and territorial governments and ECCC (ERcatalogue PW@ec.gc.ca).
  - Additional support as well as checks and balances for continuing to ensure that the areas in CPCAD meet the pan-Canadian definitions of protected areas and OECMs are in development."

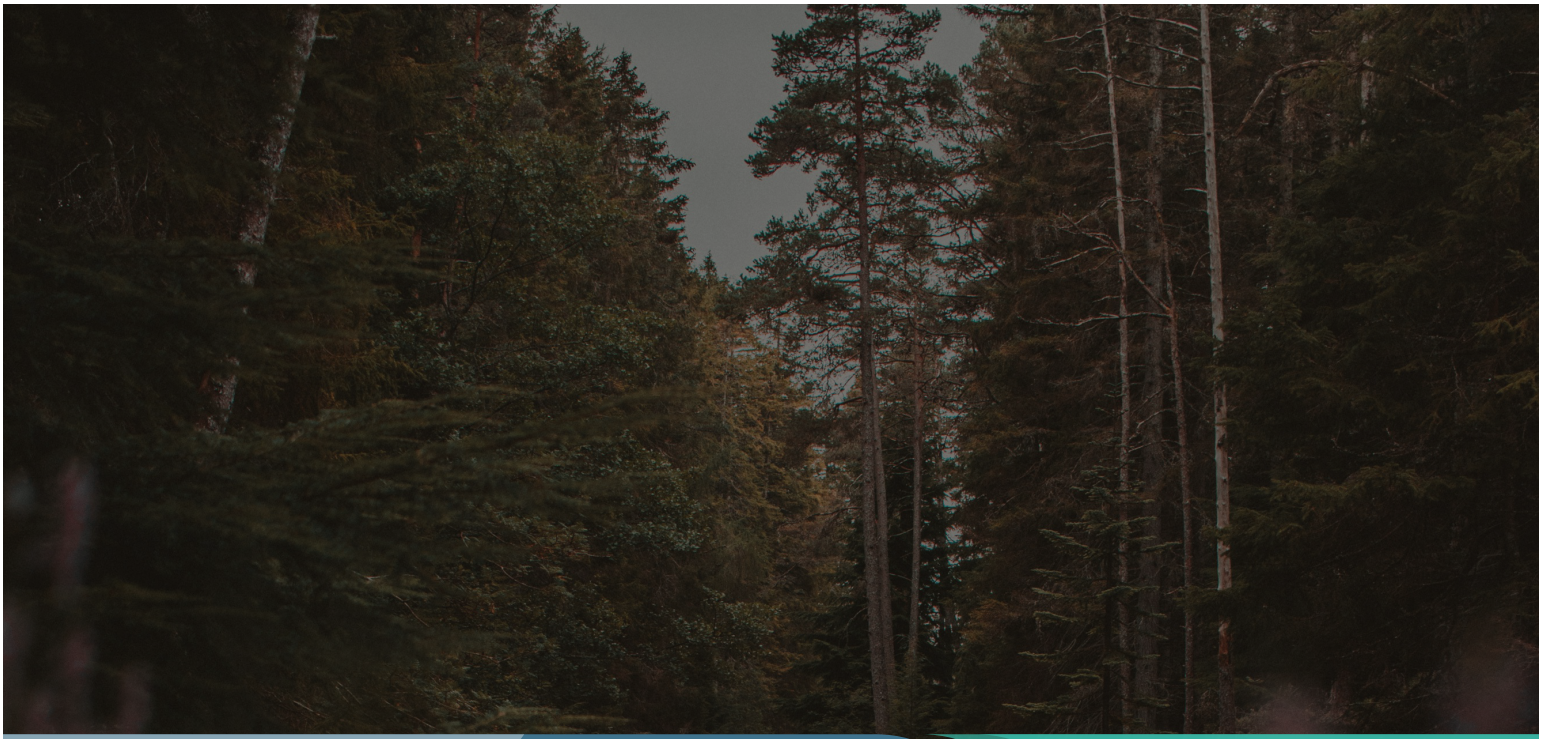
Privacy and Data Sharing

Quotes from Canada Conservation (2026) regarding privacy and data-sharing:

- "Consent of all landowners (and where appropriate, co-management partners) is required to report, and data sharing agreements must be respected where applicable."
- "ECCC houses and manages CPCAD. This means that ECCC takes the data provided by partners, known as data providers, and collates them to create a publicly available, national data layer."
- "This means that … land trusts … can have lands and waters recognized as part of the pan-Canadian network of protected and conserved areas through inclusion in CPCAD if they are the governing authority or have the governing authority's permission to report."
- "A data-provider must provide the following for an area to be added to CPCAD:
- the geospatial polygons that delineate the boundaries of the area…"
- "CPCAD and associated products are publicly available on the Government of Canada's website:
- Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) – Official webpage for CPCAD, offering centralized CPCAD information, and basic statistics.
- CPCAD Data Catalogue – Open data site that hosts geospatial files, statistics, and manuals for CPCAD.
- Open Maps Data Viewer – Interactive web map of CPCAD."

Quotes from the CPCAD User Manual (ECCC 2025):

- "1.6 OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENSE AND ACCESS
  - The CPCAD geospatial data and other associated products can be accessed on the CPCAD Canada.ca website and on the Open Government Portal. The database can be used with Geographic Information System (GIS) software that supports ESRI™ file geodatabases (.gdb), such as ArcGIS Pro or QGIS, or through ESRI REST Web Mapping Services.
  - CPCAD is subject to the Open Government License. This license encourages the general public to use information with only a few conditions. The general public is free to "Copy, modify, publish, translate, adapt, distribute or otherwise use the Information in any medium, mode or format for any lawful purpose". However, the user must acknowledge the source of the Information by including any attribution statement specified by the Information Provider(s) and, where possible, provide a link to the Open Government License.
  - For more information on the Open Government License, please refer to Open Government Licence – Canada | Open Government, Government of Canada. (ECCC 2025)"



APPENDIX 4

Protected Area or OECM



Protected Area or OECM

Both the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database and the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas require the Data Provider to indicate if the area-based conservation project is a 'Protected Area' (PA) or an 'Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure' (OECM) based on the definitions created by the IUCN (for protected areas) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (for OECMs).

The distinction is, in fact, slight, and based on management intent. Both are area-based conservation measures that conserve in situ biodiversity, but Protected Areas have biodiversity conservation as a 'primary' management goal, whereas OECMs have biodiversity conservation as either a secondary goal or not as a goal at all, but the management regime has the de facto effect of conserving in situ biodiversity (for more detailed explanation on making this distinction in the context of land trusts' work, see *Area-Based Conservation Designations: A Primer for Canadian Land Trusts*[20]).

While the WDPCA simply asks for an indication of one or the other, CPCAD requires choosing one of the following five values:

Accepted Values	Description
Protected area (PA)	*Site is a protected area*
Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)	*Site is an Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)*
Interim - protected area (PA)	*Site is an interim protected area*
Interim – Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure	*Site is an interim OECM*
Not applicable	*Site is not a PA, OECM or Interim PA / OECM. Examples include delisted sites, proposed sites, or any areas that do not count toward national statistics*

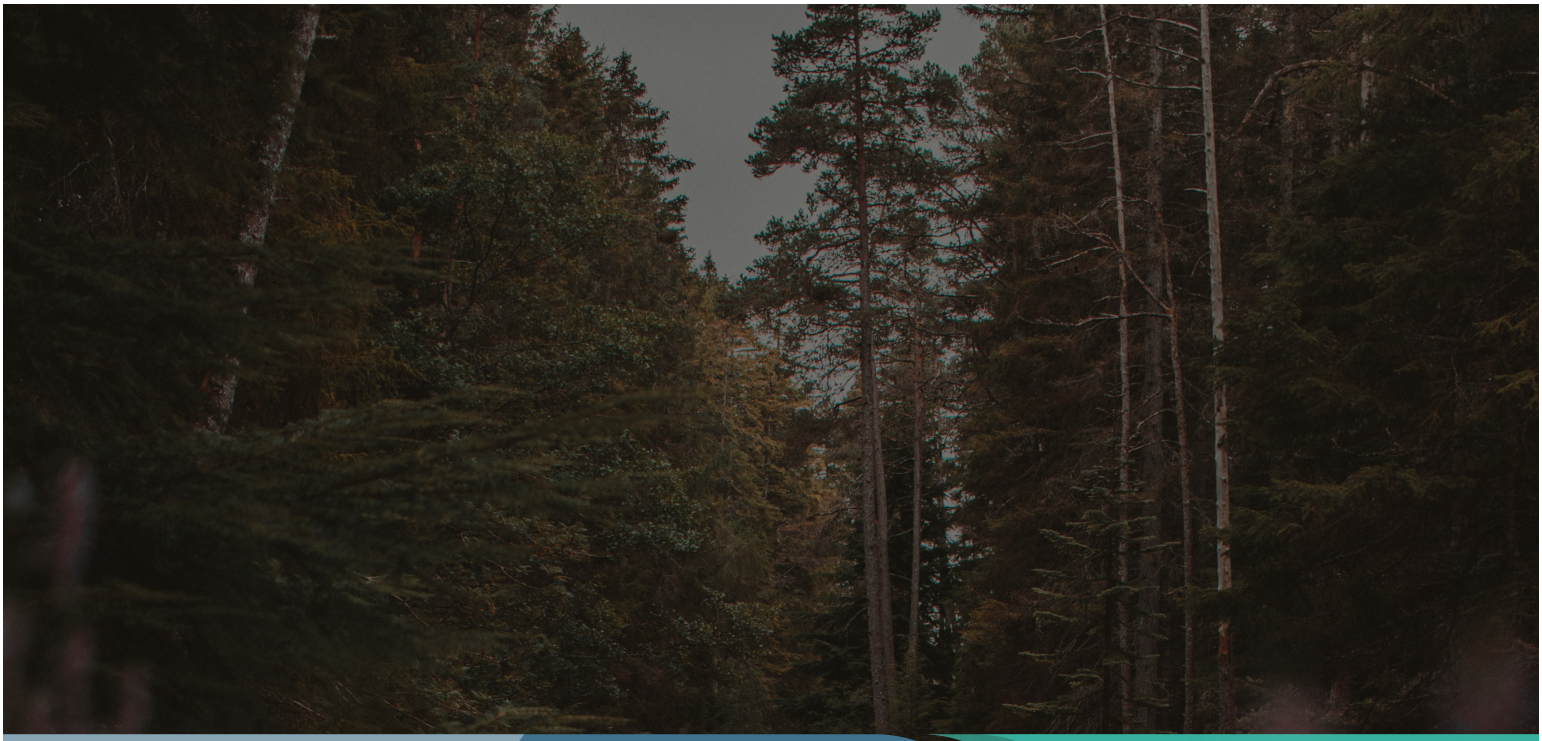
20 See specifically the section *Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions | Protected Area or OECM.*

Guidance for Private Land Conservation

For area-based conservation on private land, this question requires determining if the proposed site is a Privately Protected Area or an OECM on private land.

Though a detailed assessment may demonstrate otherwise, the following will generally hold true:

Site Description	CPCAD Response
Property owned by a land trust and managed primarily for nature conservation.	Protected area (PA)
Property owned by a land trust and managed for conservation of other values (e.g., scenery, agriculture, recreation), but whose land management restrictions result in the conservation of nature.	Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)
Property owned by a land trust and managed for conservation of other values (e.g., scenery, agriculture, recreation), and whose land management restrictions do NOT result in the conservation of nature.	Not applicable
Conservation easement held by a land trust, where the agreement identifies nature conservation values as the primary concern, and the land use restrictions / requirements prioritize nature conservation.	Protected area (PA)
Conservation easement held by a land trust, where the agreement either identifies nature conservation values as a secondary concern, or does not mention them, but the land use restrictions / requirements result in the conservation of nature.	Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)
Conservation easement held by a land trust, where the agreement either identifies nature conservation values as a secondary concern, or does not mention them, and the land use restrictions / requirements do NOT result in the conservation of nature.	Not applicable



APPENDIX 5

Identifying or Establishing Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures



Identifying or Establishing Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures

(*taken from "Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures." Stolton et al 2019, p.3*)

Protected areas and OECMs are both expected to result in the long-term and effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity. However, whereas protected areas have nature conservation as the primary management objective, OECMs may or may not have nature conservation as an objective.

Types of approaches that deliver effective conservation in other effective area-based conservation measures

1. **"Primary conservation"**—refers to areas that may meet all elements of the IUCN definition of a protected area, but which are not officially designated as such because the governance authority does not want the area to be recognised or reported as a protected area. For example, in some instances indigenous peoples and local communities may not want areas of high biodiversity value that they govern to be designated as protected areas or recorded in government protected area databases. Assuming an area meets the OECM criteria, the governance authority has the right to withhold or give its consent to the area being recognised as an OECM.

2. **"Secondary conservation"**—is achieved through the active management of an area where biodiversity outcomes are a secondary management objective. For example, enduring watershed protection policies and management may result in effective protection of biodiversity in watersheds, even though the areas may be managed primarily for objectives other than conservation. Sites managed to provide ecological connectivity between protected areas or other areas of high biodiversity, thereby contributing to their viability, may also qualify as OECMs.

3. **"Ancillary conservation"**—refers to areas that deliver in-situ conservation as a by-product of management activities, even though biodiversity conservation is not a management objective. For example, Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands protects shipwrecks and war graves. This protection has led to the ancillary conservation of important biodiversity.

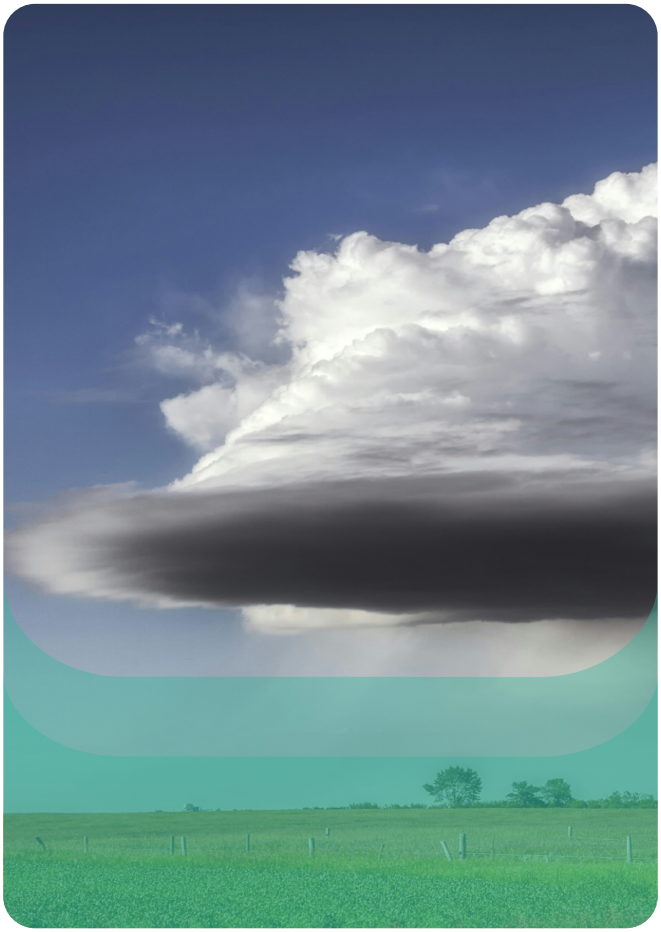
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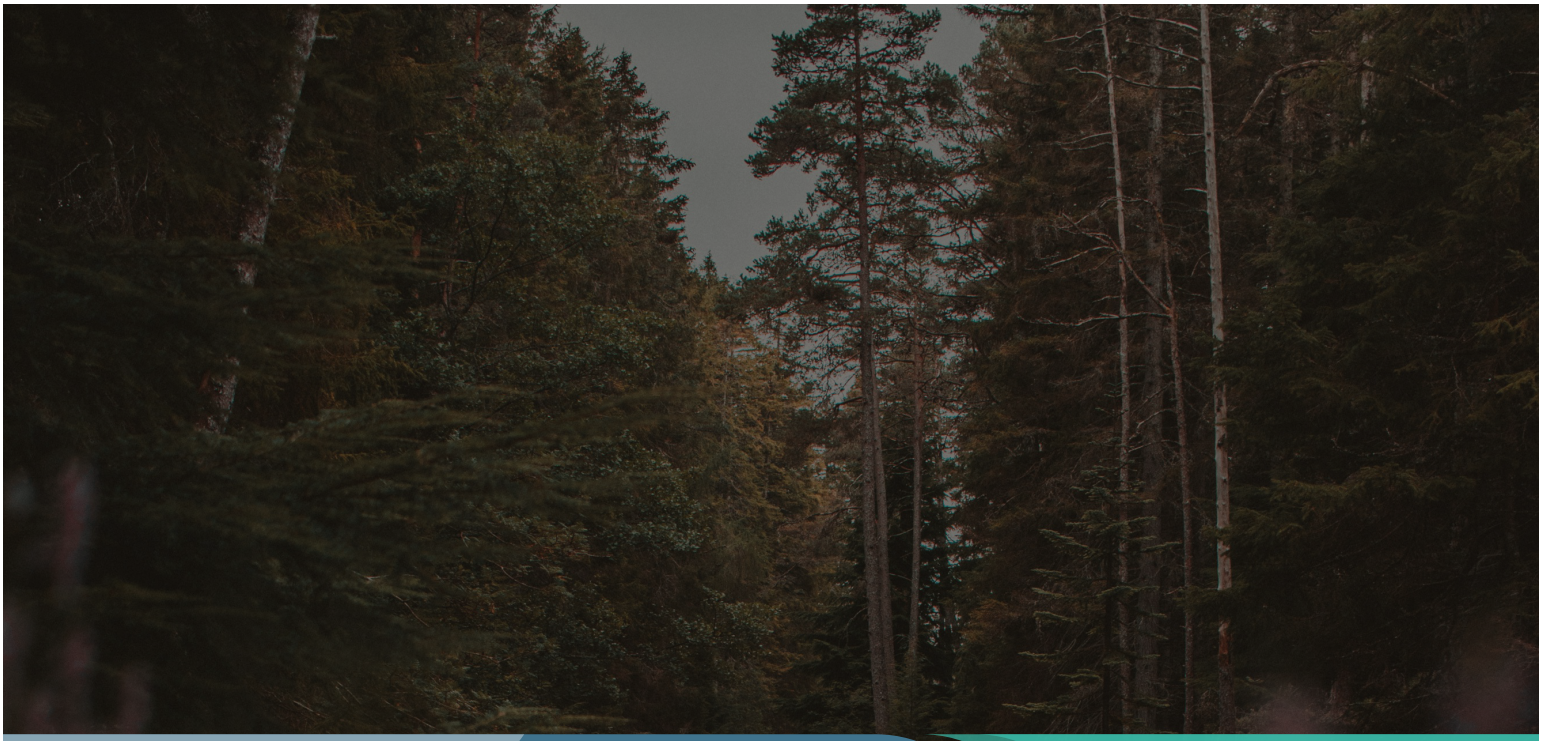
Unrecognised and unreported areas that meet the definition of a protected area

IUCN recommends that areas that meet all elements of the IUCN definition of a protected area, and are recognised as such by the governance authority, be considered protected areas rather than OECMs. For example, some privately protected areas are not reported as protected areas by national governments, even though they may satisfy the IUCN criteria.

Other intact natural areas

All of the above cases must be distinguished from other intact natural areas that are not subject to any deliberate form of conservation management but nevertheless currently harbour intact biodiversity, for example because of their remoteness or due to situations of conflict. These areas are considered to be neither OECMs nor protected areas since such sites may have little long-term security if conditions change, or if they are opened up to environmentally-damaging activities.





APPENDIX 6

IUCN Protected Area Management Categories



IUCN Protected Area Management Categories

Since the 1960s, the IUCN has recognized the need to provide some international standardization to the terminology used to designate protected areas based on the management approach taken. In 2008, the results of this work was released (Dudley 2008). Six categories were created based not on their inherent effectiveness or governance type, but on their management approach. The IUCN goes to great lengths to emphasize this is not a hierarchical rating system, but rather a method to compare 'apples to apples'.

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IUCN Protected Area Management Categories (Dudley 2008)

Category Ia: Strict nature reserve

Category Ia are strictly protected areas set aside to protect biodiversity and also possibly geological/geomorphological features, where human visitation, use and impacts are strictly controlled and limited to ensure protection of the conservation values. Such protected areas can serve as indispensable reference areas for scientific research and monitoring.

Category Ib: Wilderness area

Category Ib protected areas are usually large unmodified or slightly modified areas, retaining their natural character and influence, without permanent or significant human habitation, which are protected and managed so as to preserve their natural condition.

Category II: National park

Category II protected areas are large natural or near natural areas set aside to protect large-scale ecological processes, along with the complement of species and ecosystems characteristic of the area, which also provide a foundation for environmentally and culturally compatible spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities..

Category III: Natural monument or feature

Category III protected areas are set aside to protect a specific natural monument, which can be a landform, sea mount, submarine cavern, geological feature such as a cave or even a living feature such as an ancient grove. They are generally quite small protected areas and often have high visitor value.

Category IV Habitat/Species Management Area

Category IV protected areas aim to protect particular species or habitats and management reflects this priority. Many category IV protected areas will need regular, active interventions to address the requirements of particular species or to maintain habitats, but this is not a requirement of the category.

Category V Protected Landscape/ Seascape

A protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.

Category VI: Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources

Category VI protected areas conserve ecosystems and habitats, together with associated cultural values and traditional natural resource management systems. They are generally large, with most of the area in a natural condition, where a proportion is under sustainable natural resource management and where low-level non-industrial use of natural resources compatible with nature conservation is seen as one of the main aims of the area.

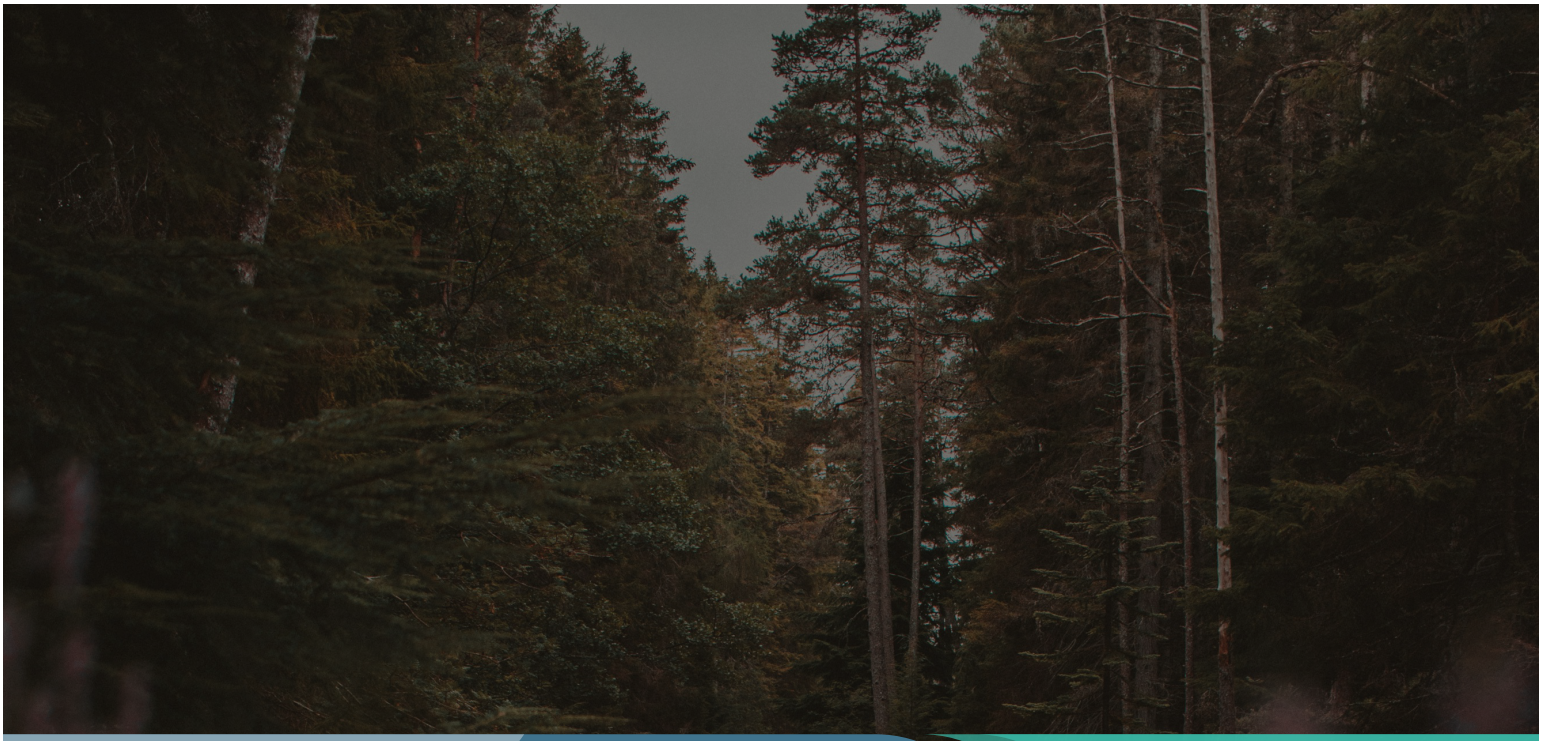
Guidance for Private Land Conservation

While any management category could apply to a Privately Protected Area (Dudley 2008) given the variety of management approaches that might be taken, the mostly likely choices in Canada are:

- Category Ia: Strict nature reserve
- Category V: Protected Landscape/ Seascape.
- Category IV: Habitat/Species Management Area
- Category III: Natural monument or feature
- Category VI: Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources

The following provides more detailed guidance for land trusts seeking to assign an IUCN protected area management category to their area-based conservation project.

IUCN Protected Area Management Categories	Relevant Private Land Conservation Scenario
Category Ia: *Strict nature reserve*	Because this category tends towards smaller, highly biodiverse areas with limited human activity, the following scenario might fit this category: A land trust acquires a piece of land or places an easement on a parcel that is remote and robustly biodiverse, where they choose to exclude all or most human access, and manage it for in situ biodiversity and scientific research
Category Ib: *Wilderness area*	Because this category tends towards larger areas, with little or no human access, and strict prohibitions on use and access, land trusts are unlikely to pursue area-based conservation of this management type.
Category II: *National park*	Because this category is focused at the national level, and assumes some type of national government governance, land trusts are unlikely to pursue area-based conservation of this management type.
Category III: *Natural monument or feature*	Because this category tends towards smaller areas with singular but representative flora or fauna, often with a link to the cultural values of a local community, the following scenario might fit this category: A land trust accepts a conservation easement or acquires a property that contains a unique remnant of forest vegetation of sacred importance to the nearby community.
Category IV: *Habitat/Species Management Area*	Because this category tends towards protection of specific habitats and associated species, where active management or even restoration is required, the following scenario might fit this category: A land trust acquires a property or accepts an easement on a property that provides important habitat for native species, as well as connectivity opportunities for the larger landscape.
Category V: *Protected Landscape/ Seascape.*	Because this category tends towards areas where sustainable levels of nature-based recreation and tourism the following scenario might fit this category: A land trust accepts an easement or acquires a property that contributes to in situ biodiversity, and establishes infrastructure and opportunities for low-intensity, nature-based recreation.
Category VI: *Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources*	Because this category tends towards larger landscapes, where the sustainable use of natural resources is a means to achieve nature conservation, the following scenario might fit this category: A land trust acquires a property or accepts an easement where grazing of native prairie was an evolutionary factor in the development of the natural system, and where sustainable grazing is used to mimic that disturbance while providing an agricultural product.



APPENDIX 7

Choosing an Enabling Mechanism Descriptor



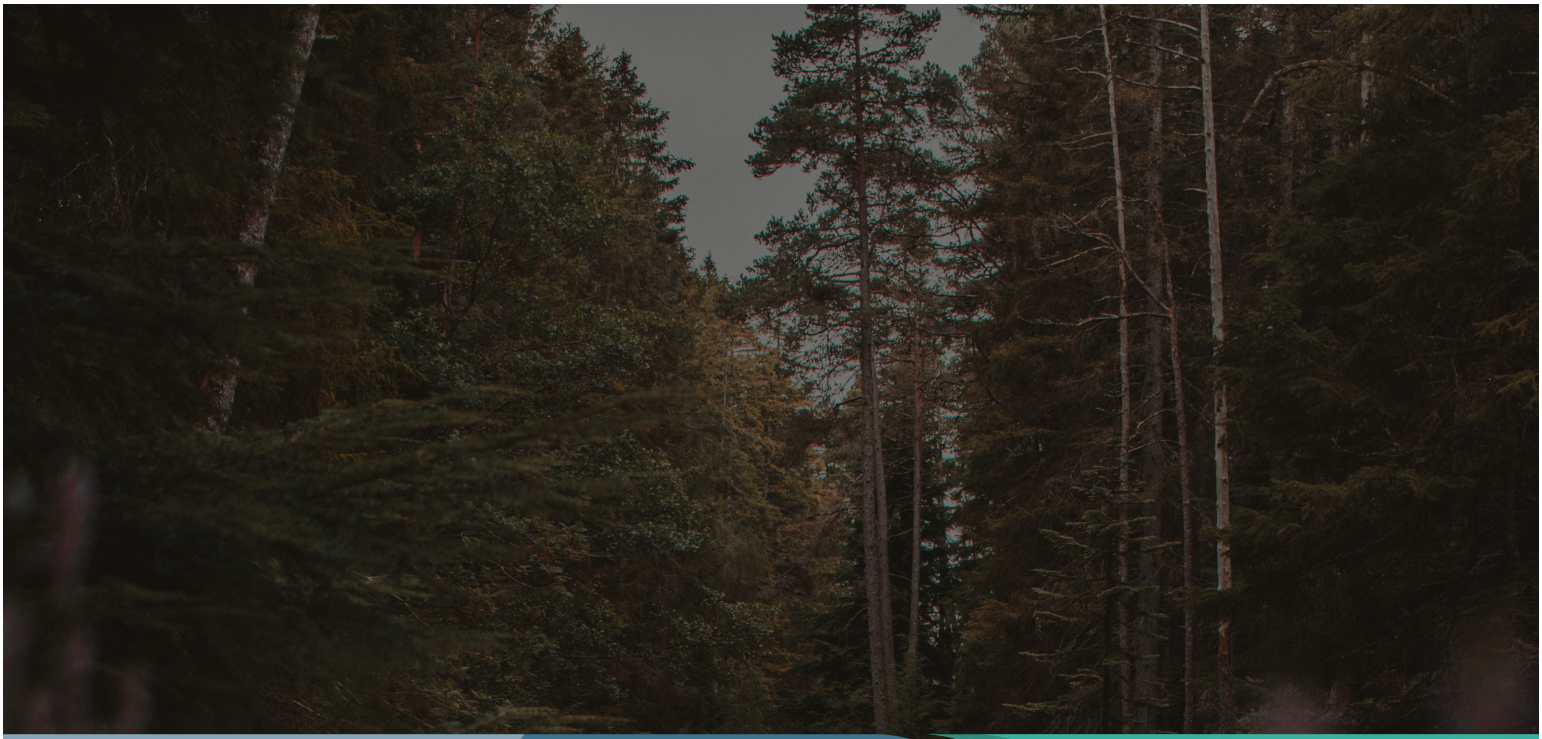
Choosing an Enabling Mechanism Descriptor

The following enabling mechanisms are the most likely to be used by Canadian land trusts.

(more detail on these devices can be found in *Designating Private Area-Based Conservation Sites: A Decision-Support Guide for Canadian Land Trusts*, specifically the sections Assessing a Private Area-based Conservation Project Against the IUCN Definitions and Appendix 3: Servitudes, Covenants, and Easements)

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IUCN Protected Area Management Categories	Relevant Private Land Conservation Scenario
Fee-simple ownership	When a land trust purchases a property outright (in 'fee simple'), and manages it for biodiversity conservation.
Restrictive covenant	An unlikely, but potential option, sometimes used prior to the enactment of conservation easement legislation across the country in the 1990s
Conservation easement	[Common law jurisdictions only] 'Conservation easement' is the generic term for the legislatively-enabled private legal contracts between a landowner and a qualified conservation easement holder which 1) lays out land use restrictions and requirements in favour of nature conservation, 2) is binding on future landowners, 3) ties the easement to an entity vs a land parcel, and 3) makes landowners liable for both damages and restorative actions. Different common-law jurisdictions use the terms Conservation Easements, Conservation Covenants, and Conservation Agreements for this kind of device, but they all use the 'easement in gross' structure as the basic building block. Because the terms 'Agreement' and 'Covenant' imply much less strict conservation legal authority, it is recommended that land trusts use the term 'conservation easement,' however, a Governing Authority is free to use whichever name they choose.
Servitude de conservation immobilière (eng.: Real Conservation Servitude)	[Quebec only] The civil law device that involves a landowner choosing which part of their property to conserve, then using a legal agreement (servitude) with a conservation organization to restrict certain land use activities that would detrimentally affect the conservation values.
Servitude de conservation personnelle (eng: Personal Conservation Servitude)	[Quebec only] Servitudes with a focus on conservation that do not require a dominant tenement, thus allowing for the agreement to be with an entity that is not an adjacent landowner (may include the term 'real' or 'perpetual' to signify the greater conservation ability relative to a traditional personal servitude.
Réserve naturelle sur un terrain privé. (eng: Nature Reserve on Private Land)	[Quebec only] A specific type of 'servitude de conservation immobilière' where the landowner enters into a similar agreement, only in this case with the Government of Quebec.



APPENDIX 8

Describing Governance, Ownership, and Management



Describing Governance, Ownership, and Management

The private land conservation tools used by land trusts may have simple ownership, governance, and management structures, or they may be complex. As well, a fundamental dynamic of land trust activity is working with landowners or with other land trusts, governments, or other nature NGOs.

- **Ownership** – refers to who holds the title to the property.
- **Management** – refers to what is being done in pursuit of given objectives (i.e. the means and actions to achieve such objectives) (Mitchell et al 2018)
- **Governance** – refers to who decides what these objectives are, what to do to pursue them, and with what means (Mitchell et al 2018).

When a land trust owns a property in fee simple, and manages it themselves, ownership, management, and governance are vested in the same entity.

When a land trust holds a conservation easement on a property, they are deemed to be the Governing Authority, not because they govern the property, but because they 'govern' the protective device, making the decisions about the conservation objectives and how they will be achieved. The landowner is still the 'owner', and very likely the management authority.

The following excerpts from the allowable responses for these three fields, but limits them to those that are applicable to land trusts, then provides explanatory guidance.

Ownership Type

ToC

Ownership Type	Land Trust Scenarios
Communal	This category would apply in situations such as a land trust holding a conservation easement on a property that is owned under a communal structure, such as an agricultural cooperative, or a religious entity.
Individual landowners	This category would apply in any case where a land trust holds a conservation easement on a property held in fee-simple by an individual.
For-profit organizations	This category would apply If a land trust were to hold a conservation easement on a property owned by a for-profit corporation. In cases where an 'individual' has incorporated, and the lands are held by their corporation, the land trust can choose this category or 'individual landowner'.
Non-profit organizations	This category would apply in any case where the land is owned in fee-simple by the land trust, or where the land trust holds a conservation easement on a property owned by another not-for-profit such as a nature NGO, religious organization, etc.
Joint Ownership	This category would apply In cases where two land trusts hold joint title to a property in fee simple. It would NOT apply in the case of a conservation easement – in that case one party is the 'owner' and one is the 'governing authority.'
Multiple Ownership	This category refers to situations where multiple entities hold title to different parts of an area-based conservation site. This is likely inapplicable to land trusts, and land trusts negotiate specific agreements with each landowner.

Governance Type

Ownership Type	Land Trust Scenarios
Communal	This category would apply in situations such as a land trust holding a conservation easement on a property that is owned under a communal structure, such as an agricultural cooperative, or a religious entity.
Individual landowners	This category would apply in any case where a land trust holds a conservation easement on a property held in fee-simple by an individual.
For-profit organizations	This category would apply If a land trust were to hold a conservation easement on a property owned by a for-profit corporation. In cases where an 'individual' has incorporated, and the lands are held by their corporation, the land trust can choose this category or 'individual landowner'.
Non-profit organizations	This category would apply in any case where the land is owned in fee-simple by the land trust, or where the land trust holds a conservation easement on a property owned by another not-for-profit such as a nature NGO, religious organization, etc.
Joint Ownership	This category would apply In cases where two land trusts hold joint title to a property in fee simple. It would NOT apply in the case of a conservation easement – in that case one party is the 'owner' and one is the 'governing authority.'
Multiple Ownership	This category refers to situations where multiple entities hold title to different parts of an area-based conservation site. This is likely inapplicable to land trusts, and land trusts negotiate specific agreements with each landowner.

Management Authority

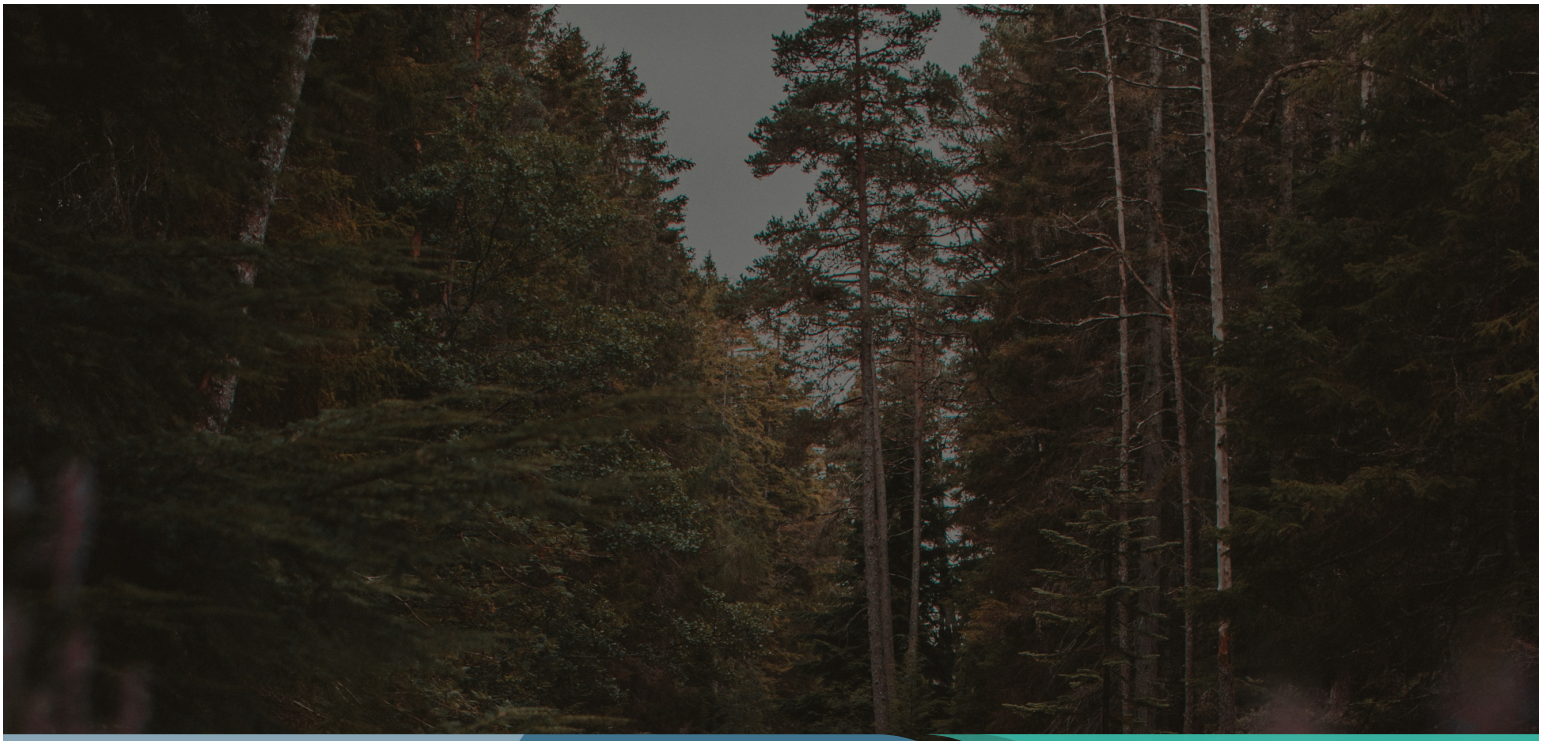
ToC

The 'Management Authority' field is slightly different in that there is no requirement to identify a 'type', just the name of the management authority.

For a property owned in fee simple by a land trust, it would be the land trust.

However, this creates a dilemma for conservation easements, as the Management Authority is usually a private landowner, and land trusts need to be careful regarding sharing the information of private individuals. For these cases, it is recommended that land trusts simply enter 'Private Landowner.' The landowner is not the 'owner' of the protective device, and the names and contact information for the land trust are entered in other places, meaning verifiers have access to the information they need.





APPENDIX 9

'Status' of Area-based Conservation Sites



'Status' of Area-based Conservation Sites

For the most part, the 'Status' field is (seemingly) clear and self-explanatory – if the status is 'proposed', 'interim' or 'designated', one can intuit what the likely state of the protective device is.

However, for Canadian land trusts, several challenges arise in choosing the appropriate option from the list of acceptable values:

- The CPCAD uses slightly different fields than the international WDPCA database, and interprets the common ones slightly differently;
- Two designations are inapplicable;
- In general, the allowable answers were designed for the more traditional concept of a protected area, and require some interpretation to fit area-based conservation sites under land trust (private) governance; and
- 'Dedicated' and 'Established' are colloquially the same, but nuanced for the databases.

Discordances Between the National and International Databases

A full list of acceptable values for each database is included further below, but the summary of discordances is as follows:

World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)	Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)
	Delisted
Designated	**Designated**
Established	**Established**
Proposed	
	Interim
Inscribed	**Inscribed**
Adopted	**Adopted**



ToC

'Status' Field - World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)

Accepted Values	Description
Proposed	The protected area or OECM is in the process of being legally/formally designated It should be noted that sites may sometimes be functioning as protected areas or OECMs while proposed, as the legal processes of designation may take a long time.
Inscribed	Only applicable to protected areas designated under the World Heritage Convention.
Adopted	Only applicable to protected areas designated as Specially Protected Area of Marine Importance under the Barcelona Convention.
Designated	The protected area or OECM is recognized or dedicated through legal/formal means. Implies specific binding commitment to conservation in the long term
Established	The protected area or OECM is recognized or dedicated through other effective means. Implies commitment to conservation outcomes in the long term, but not necessarily with legal or formal recognition.

Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD)

Accepted Values	Description
Delisted	Site no longer protected.
Designated	The protected area or OECM is recognized or dedicated though legal/formal means. Implies specific binding commitment to conservation in the long term.
Established	Site recognized or dedicated through other effective means. Implies commitment to conservation outcomes in the long term, but not necessarily with legal recognition.
Interim	Functionally protected/conserved sites that are in the process of being legally or otherwise formally designated. These will be reported to WDPA as "Established" to align with the WDPA definition. Interim sites should have PA_OECM_DEF = [Interim PA, Interim OECM].
Inscribed	Only applicable under the World Heritage Convention.
Adopted	Only applicable to protected areas designated as Specially Protected Area of Marine Importance under the Barcelona



Inapplicable Designations

"*Inscribed*" and "*Adopted*" are two ultra-specific status descriptions only applicable under the World Heritage Convention and for protected areas designated as Specially Protected Area of Marine Importance under the Barcelona Convention.

Interim or Proposed Status

In general, the allowable answers were designed for the more traditional concept of a protected area, and require some interpretation to fit area-based conservation sites under land trust (private) governance.

Publicly-protected areas may have a long road between when the decision is made to protect them, and when that protection is formalized by the legislative authority. In such cases, they may be submitted to the databases as "Proposed" or "Interim." Land trusts' area-based conservation projects are unlikely to have such a status while they are being developed.

Interpreting 'Designated' vs 'Established'

In general, the databases seek to differentiate between sites that that legal/formal recognition ('Designated), and those that do not (Established). The most common example of the latter given in the guidance documents is sites established via 'customary laws.'

The key phrase used is "Implies commitment to conservation outcomes in the long term", with the distinction being *Established* sites are qualified with "but not necessarily with legal or formal recognition."

Dudley (2008) gives clarifying detail around this phrase by suggesting that in the context of Protected Areas:

- "Implies specific binding commitment to conservation in the long term, through e.g.:
  - International conventions and agreements
  - National, provincial and local law
  - Customary law
  - **Covenants of NGOs**
  - Private trusts and company policies
  - Certification schemes." [author's bolding]

Dudley (2008) also gives clarity on what is meant by "legal or formal recognition" in the context of land trusts through the explanation what "legal or other effective means" implies for Protected Areas:

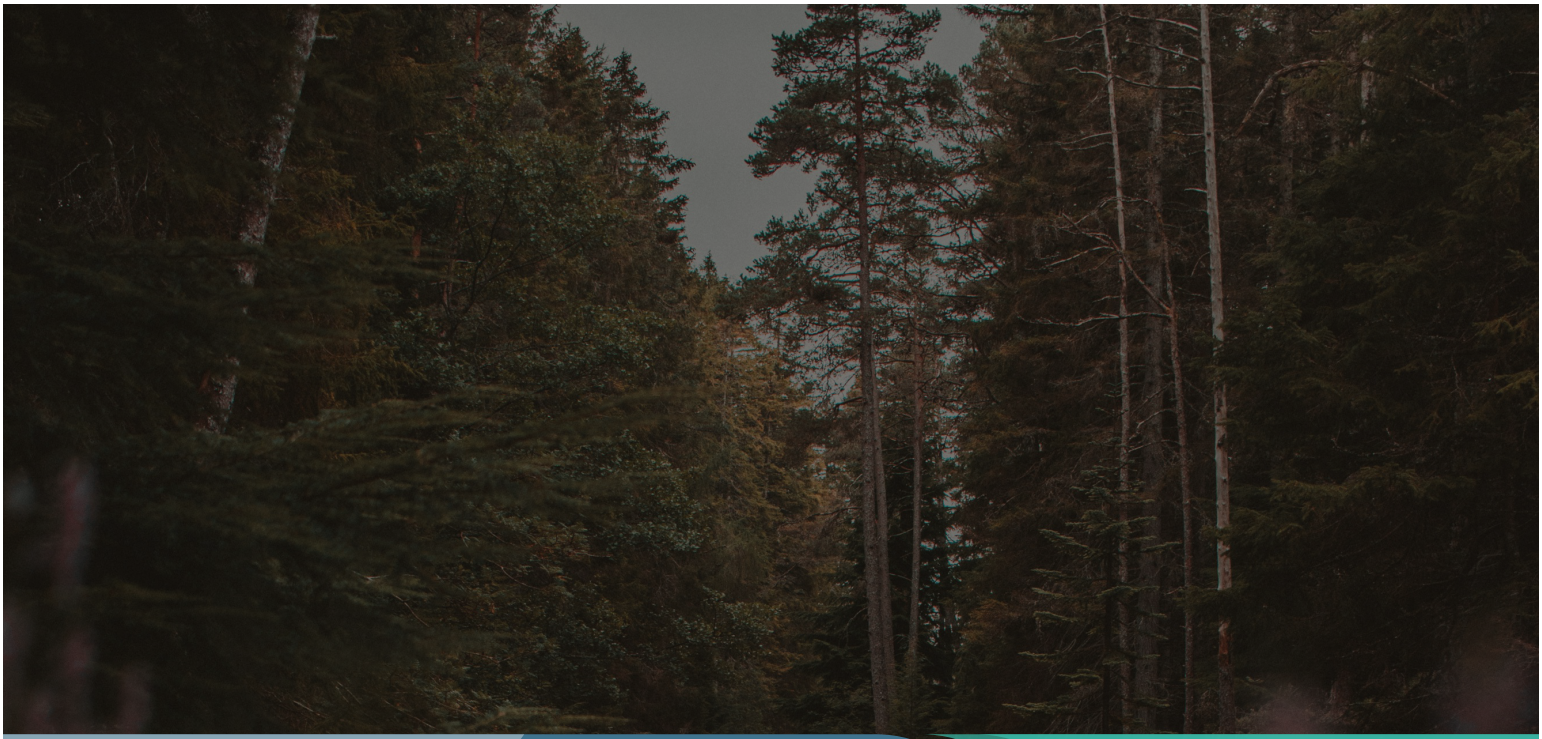
> "*Means that protected areas must either be gazetted (that is, recognised under statutory civil law), recognised through an international convention or agreement, or else managed through other effective but non-gazetted means, such as through recognised traditional rules under which community conserved areas operate or the* ***policies of established non-governmental organizations***." [author's bolding]

ToC

Applying Status Labels in the Context of Private Land Conservation

The takeaway for land trusts is that properties subject to the "covenants of NGOs" (i.e., conservation easements), and fee-simple properties subject to the "policies of established non-governmental organizations" (i.e., land trusts), should be entered as having





APPENDIX 10

World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas Field List



World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas Field List

ToC



Data Table Requirements

ToC

Requirement*	Provided by	Field Name		WDPCA accepted a values
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	WDPAID	WDPA ID	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Unique identifier for a protected Area.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	WDPA_PID	WDPA Parcel ID	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Unique identifier for parcels or zones within a protected area.
Minimum	Data provider	PA DEF	Protected Area Definition	Allowed values: 1 (meets IUCN and CBD protected area definitions), 0 (meets the CBD definition of an OECM)
Minimum	Data provider	NAME	Name	Name of the protected area (PA) as provided by the data provider.
Minimum	Data provider	ORIG_NAME	Original Name	Name of the protected area in original language.
Minimum	Data provider	DESIG	Designation	Name of designation.
Complete	Data provider	DESIG_ENG	English Designation	Designation in English. Allowed values for international-level designations: Ramsar Site, Wetland of International Importance; UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserve; World Heritage Site (natural or mixed).Allowed values for regional-level designations: Baltic Sea Protected Area (HELCOM); Specially Protected Area (Cartagena Convention); Marine Protected Area (CCAMLR); Marine Protected Area (OSPAR); Site of Community Importance (Habitats Directive); Special Protection Area (Birds Directive); Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (Barcelona Convention). No fixed values for protected areas designated at a national level.
Minimum	Data provider	DESIG_TYPE	Designation Type	Allowed values: National, Regional, International, Not Applicable
Complete	Data provider	IUCN_CAT	IUCN Management Category	Allowed values for PAs: la, Ib, II, III, IV, V, VI, Not Applicable, Not Assigned, Not Reported Allowed values for OECMs: Not Applicable
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	INT_CRIT	International Criteria	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. For World Heritage and Ramsar sites only. Allowed values for OECMs: Not Applicable
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	MARINE	Marine	Allowed values: 0 (predominantly or entirely terrestrial), 1 (Coastal: marine and terrestrial), and 2 (predominantly or entirely marine). The value '1' is only used for polygons.
Minimum	Data provider	REP_M__ AREA	Reported Marine Area	Marine area in square kilometres.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	GIS_M_AREA	GIS Marine Area	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC.

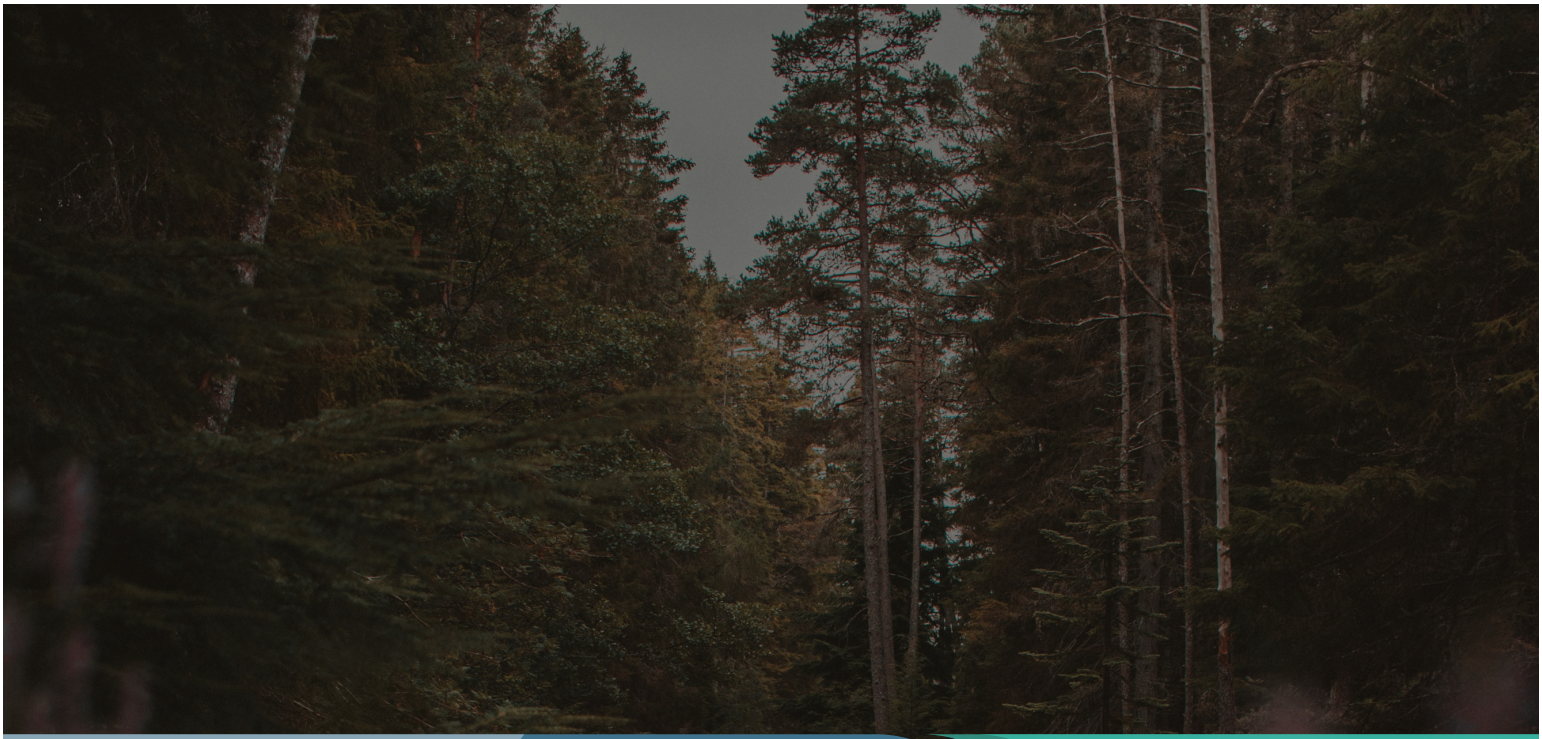
ToC

Requirement*	Provided by	Field Name		WDPCA accepted a values
Minimum	Data provider	REP_AREA	Reported Area	Area in square kilometres.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	GIS_AREA	GIS Area	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC.
Complete	Data provider	NO_TAKE	No Take	Allowed values: All, Part, None, Not Reported, Not Applicable (if no marine component).
Complete	Data provider	NO_TK AREA	No Take Area	Area of the no-take area in square kilometres.
Minimum	Data provider	STATUS	Status	Allowed values: Proposed, Inscribed, Adopted, Designated, Established.
Minimum	Data provider	STATUS_YR	Status Year	Year of enactment of status (STATUS field).
Complete	Data provider	GOV_TYPE	Governance Type	Allowed values: Federal or national ministry or agency, Sub-national ministry or agency, Government-delegated management, Transboundary governance, Collaborative governance, Joint governance, Individual landowners, Non-profit organisations, For-profit organisations, Indigenous peoples, Local communities, Not Reported.
Complete	Data provider	OWN_TYPE	Ownership Type	Allowed values: State, Communal, Individual landowners, For-profit organisations, Non-profit organisations, Joint ownership, Multiple ownership, Contested, Not Reported.
Complete	Data provider	MANG_AUTH	Management Authority	Individual or group that manages the protected area.
Complete	Data provider	MANG_PLAN	Management Plan	Link or reference to the protected area's management plan.
Complete	Data provider	CONS_OBJ	Conservation Objectives	For PAs: N/A Allowed values for OECMs: Primary, Secondary, Ancillary.
Complete	Data provider	SUPP_INFO	Supplementary Information	For PAs: N/A For OECMs: Link or reference to supporting information on the OECM, such as details of how it fulfils each element of the OECM definition.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	VERIF	Verification	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Fixed values: State Verified, Expert Verified, Not Reported (for unverified data that was already in the WDPA prior to the inclusion of the 'Verification' field).
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	RESTRICT	Restriction	Not publicly available, for UNEP-WCMC use only.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	METADATAID	Metadata ID	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Link to source table.
Complete	Data provider	SUB_LOC	Sub-national Location	Allowed values: ISO 3166-2 sub-national code where the PA is located. Separated by a semi-colon if multiple.
Minimum	Data provider	PARENT_ ISO3	Parent ISO3 Code	Allowed values: ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 character code of country where the PA is located. Separated by a semi-colon if multiple.
Minimum	Data provider	ISO3	ISO3 Code	Allowed values: ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 character code of country or territory where the PA is located. Separated by a semi-colon if multiple.

Source Table Requirements

ToC

Requirement*	Provided by	Field Name		WDPCA accepted a values
Minimum	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC	METADATAID	Metadata ID	An ID assigned by UNEP-WCMC that is used to link each record in the WDPA or OECM database to the relevant source information in the Source Table.
Minimum	Data provider	DATA_TITLE	Data Set Title	The title of the dataset e.g. Protected Areas of Ireland; OECMs of South Africa.
Minimum	Data provider	RESP_PARTY	Responsible Party	The data provider, i.e. the organisation, national government, or other actor that claims ownership of the data or that is providing the data on behalf of their owner. 'Not Reported' is used when this information is not available (applies only to older data in need of update.
Minimum	Data provider	RESP_EMAIL	Responsible Party Contact E-mails)	Contact e-mail address of the organisation listed as the responsible party which maintains the ownership of the data or 254 that is providing the data on behalf of its owner. "Not Reported" is used when this information is not available (applies only to older data in need of update.
Minimum	Data provider	VERIFIER	Verifying Party	The organisation, national government or other actor that has verified the data. For information submitted prior to the introduction of this attribute in March 2015 this field is assigned a value of 'None'.
Minimum	Data provider	V_EMAIL	Verifying Party Contact Emails)	Contact e-mail address of person(s) and organisations) responsible for verifying the data. For information submitted prior to the introduction of this attribute in March 2015 this field is assigned a value of 'None'.
Minimum	Data provider	YEAR	Year	The year when the dataset was first submitted to the WDPA or OECM database. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available (applies only to older data in need of update).
Minimum	Data provider	UPDATE_YR	Update Year	The year in which dataset was last updated in the WDPA or OECM
Minimum	Data provider	LANGUAGE	Dataset Language	Language(s) used within the dataset. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Minimum	Data provider	CHAR_SET	Dataset Character Set	Full name of the character coding standard used in the dataset. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Minimum	Data provider	REF_SYSTEM	Coordinate System	Name and parameters of the coordinate system of the original dataset including, where applicable, datum, ellipsoid or projection: Not Reported is used when these data are not
Complete	Data provider	SCALE	Scale	The scale of the dataset used when the data was originally created (digitized, surveyed, etc.). The denominator of the representative fraction on a source map, for example on a scale of 1:150000 the denominator given should be 150000. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Complete	Data provider	LINEAGE	Lineage	Information about the creation, events, changes or transformations in the life of a dataset including the process used to create and maintain the dataset and associated dates. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Complete	Data provider	CITATION	Citation	Recommended text to be used when referencing the dataset. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Complete	Data provider	DISCLAIMER	Disclaimer	Warnings/exceptions to use of the data. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not



APPENDIX 11

Data Submission Agreement for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)



Data Submission Agreement for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)

(*extracted from UNEP-WCMC's User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas and world database on other effective area-based conservation measures: 1.6. (UNEP-WCMC 2019)*)

The next two pages contain the 'Data Contributor Agreement' and the confirmation the contributor has the right to provide the dataset to the WDPCA.



Data Contributor Agreement

ToC

[Insert name of organisation/indigenous people/local community/private actor
Address
Telephone Number
Email Address]

On behalf of [insert organisation/indigenous people/local community/private actor name], I/we the undersigned (the data provider) are providing the following dataset to UNEP-WCMC for integration into the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and/or World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM), and/or ICCA (territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities) Registry: [insert name of dataset]. This may include protected areas and/or other effective area-based conservation measures, and/or ICCAs aligning with neither of these categories (included in the ICCA Registry only). The dataset includes spatial boundaries and attributes relating to [insert name of country/region/etc.].

Brief description of the data (including the format of the data, number of polygons and points, and any other relevant information. Please also indicate whether data is being provided for the WDPA, WD-OECM, ICCA Registry, or multiple):

_____

_____

_____

_____

The WDPA and WD-OECM are aggregated datasets of the best available data from many sources. They are joint products of the UN Environment Programme and IUCN, managed by UNEP-WCMC. They are used for multiple conservation purposes, as well as providing support to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations relating to environmental sustainability and reporting on progress towards internationally-agreed environmental targets. The databases are supplemented by the ICCA Registry, which stores additional information on territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities.

Unless otherwise stated, this dataset is being provided 'free of restrictions'*. We, the undersigned, agree and understand that by providing data for inclusion in the WDPA and/or WD-OECM it will be viewable and downloadable in accordance with the WDPA Terms and Conditions through websites operated by UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, utilised for analyses, and re-distributed to third parties for use on other platforms.

ToC

I/We confirm that I/we have the rights, permissions and authority to release this dataset to UNEP-WCMC

The data provider has the permission of relevant stakeholders and rights-holders to share the dataset with UNEP-WCMC. Where relevant, the data provider shares the dataset with UNEP-WCMC with the free, prior and informed consent of communities and/or indigenous peoples involved in the management, governance or ownership of the sites described in the dataset. The data provider has made all reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy of the dataset.

If the dataset is found to have been provided without the permission of the relevant stakeholders and rights-holders, it will be removed from the WDPA and/or WD-OECM and/or ICCA Registry with immediate effect.

UNEP-WCMC will retain information on the name and contact details of the data provider (personal data) for the purposes of future correspondence, including queries relating to the data, and requests for updated data. UNEP-WCMC will not share personal data with third parties. UNEP-WCMC's privacy policy (*https://www.unep-wcmc.org/en/terms-conditions*) outlines in more detail how it implements relevant data protection legislation.

The designations of geographical entities in any dataset submitted to UNEP-WCMC or used by UNEP-WCMC do not imply the expression of any view or opinion whatsoever on the part of UNEP-WCMC or the data provider concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

UNEP-WCMC will recognize and respect the intellectual property rights of the data provider and will maintain proper attribution to the organisation/indigenous people/local community named above, and source information on the data as provided to

UNEP-WCMC.UNEP-WCMC reserves the right to seek verification of the dataset from its partners, and to remove or withhold from the WDPA and/or WD-OECM and/or ICCA Registry any data that cannot be verified.

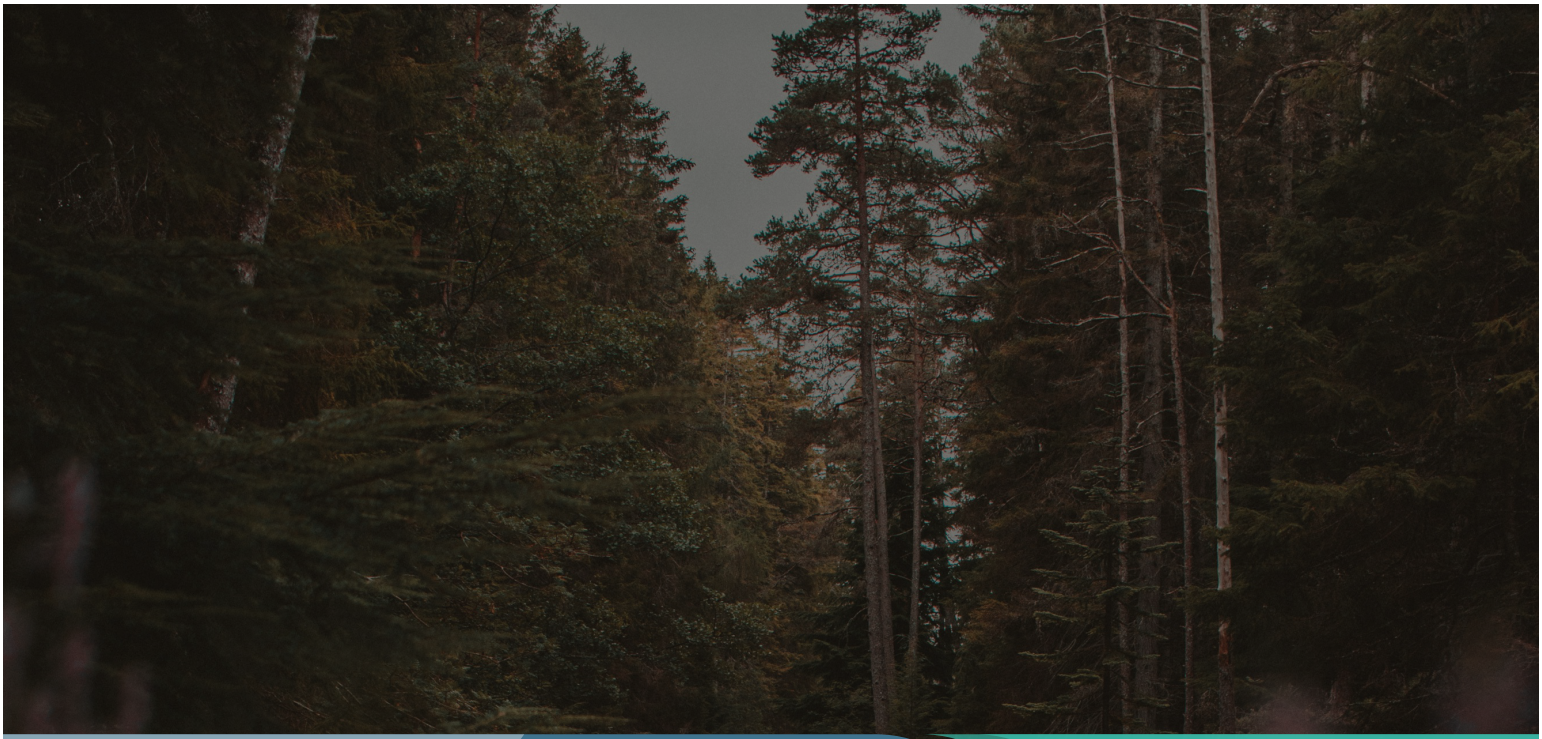
I/we hereby give permission to UNEP-WCMC for the integration of these data into the WDPA and/or WD-OECM and/or ICCA Registry.

Signature .....

Title and name .....

Date .....

* *Footnote: UNEP-WCMC may accept data with restrictions. This includes data that is available for onward release but not for commercial use ("commercial use" means a) any use by, on behalf of, or to inform or assist the activities of, a commercial entity (an entity that operates 'for profit') or b) use by any individual or non-profit entity for the purposes of revenue generation), and data that is made available only to UNEP-WCMC, UN Environment Programme and IUCN, and is not for onward release. If you wish to place restrictions on data, or require further information, please contact protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org*



APPENDIX 12

Data Verification for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)



Data Verification for the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA)

ToC

Data verification for area-based conservation projects submitted by Canadian land trusts to the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA) is a tale of two contradictory narratives.

As noted in the main text, "non-government organizations" may choose to have their data verified by government ('state verified') or by a third-party expert ('expert verified'). The most recent version of the WDPCA user manual (UNEP-WCMC 2019) is adamant about the ability of NGOs to make this choice:

> "*The expert-verification process is rarely used but is intended to support the integration of data on protected areas and OECMs that are under the governance of indigenous peoples, local communities and private actors. If these governance actors choose to provide data directly, they can decide whether their data will be verified by experts or by the national government*."

One of the four "Basic principles for verification of the WDPA data" listed in that document is:

> "***Data submitted by non-governmental sources**: Incoming data from non-government data providers undergo a verification process before being added to the WDPA or OECM database. Data can be verified either by state verifiers or by expert verifiers, depending on the wishes of the data provider. The VERIF field differentiates between "State Verified" and "Expert Verified" data. If neither party can verify the data, they do not enter the WDPA or OECM database*."

The WDPCA user manual does note that, "The data verification process is relatively new and will be refined and further developed in the future."

A portion of further refinement came six years later with the release of How to submit data for sites under private governance: Guidance for private actors (UNEP-WCMC 2025a).

Unfortunately, that guidance first directly contradicted the User Manual:

> "***Verification of data submitted by private actors**: Data submitted by private actors to the Protected Planet Initiative are subject to a verification process by the relevant national government. This involves the government confirming that the area should be considered part of the country's system of protected areas or OECMs and reported within the Protected Planet databases. Once data are submitted to Protected Planet by a private actor, the team will reach out to the relevant government ministry, department or agency to ask them to review the data. Once the government has reviewed the data and any relevant issues raised have been resolved, then the data can be formally accepted and included in the next monthly update of the databases*." (UNEP-WCMC 2025a)

... then promised again to provide guidance for expert verification at some point in the future.

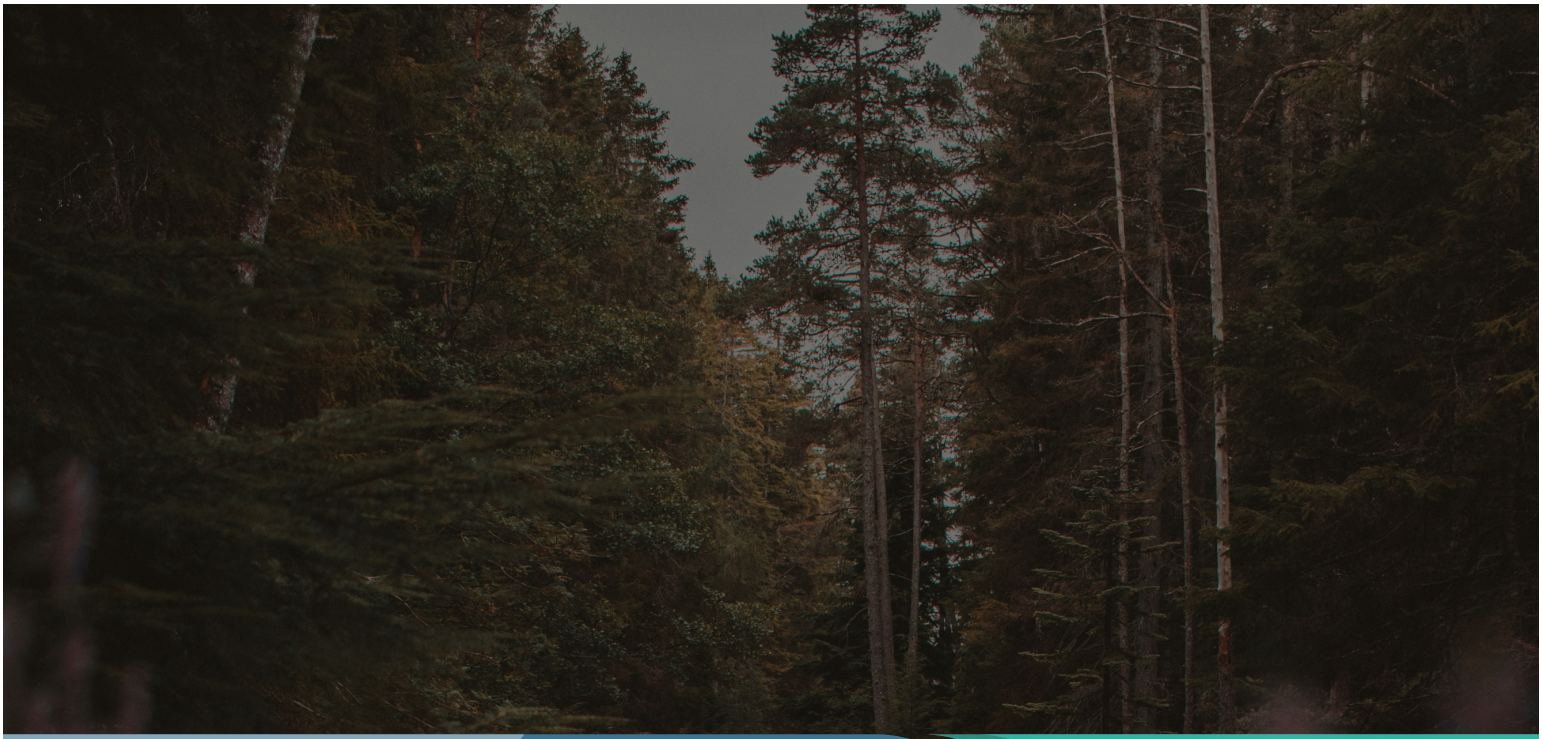
> "*UNEP-WCMC is in the process of developing an expert verification process for sites under private governance (such a process already exists for sites under the governance of Indigenous Peoples and local communities), which will then provide an additional/alternative avenue for data verification*." (UNEP-WCMC 2025a)

Very likely the problem stems from the broad and vague reference to 'private actors' and the similarly broad governance category of 'private governance.' As noted earlier, these government-centric conceptions group for-profit, extractive industry, companies in the same category as charitable conservation NGOs.

As well, exactly what 'verification' entails is fuzzy. The WDPCA suggests that this is more bureaucratic than conservation assessment:

> "*The role of data verifiers is to confirm that, to the best of their knowledge, the data provider has submitted correct information. They will also be asked to raise any concerns they have relating to data accuracy and to the process by which the data have been collected*" (UNEP-WCMC 2019).

In practice, governments in Canada have focused most of their 'verification' effort on sorting Protected Areas from OECMs.



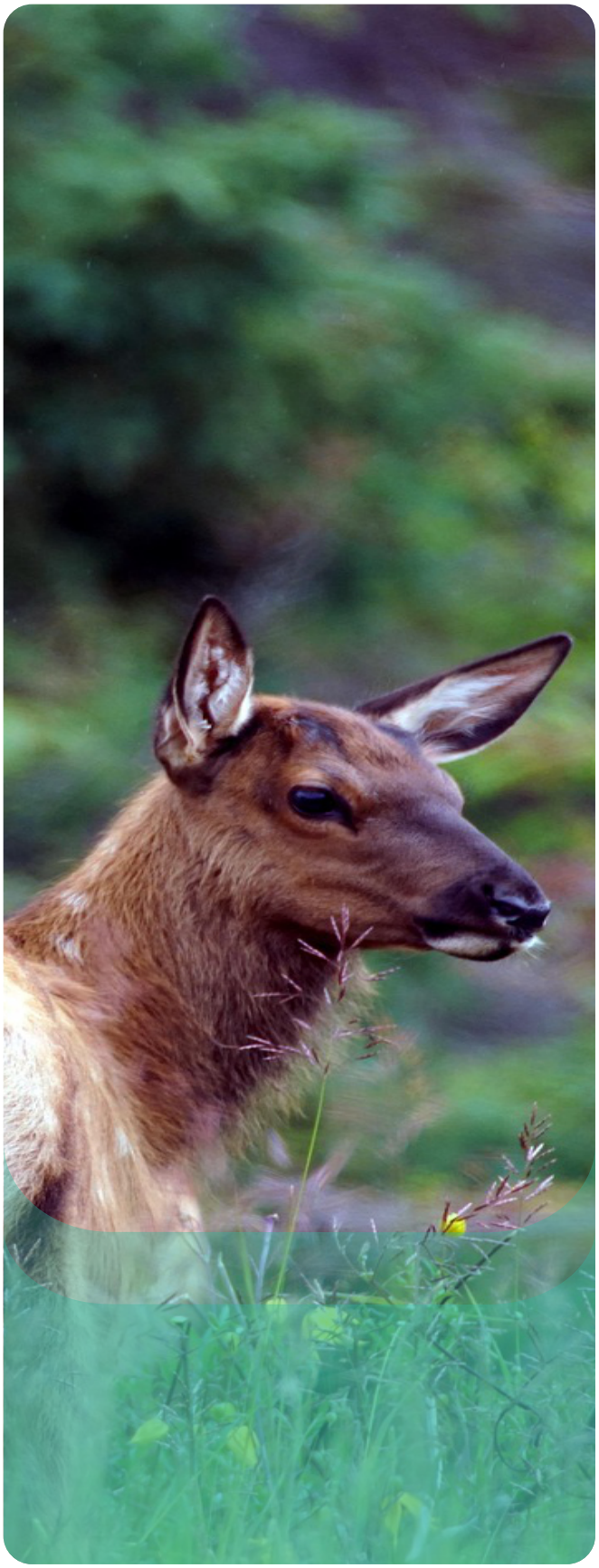
APPENDIX 13

ISO Sub-National Code (Provinces and Territories)

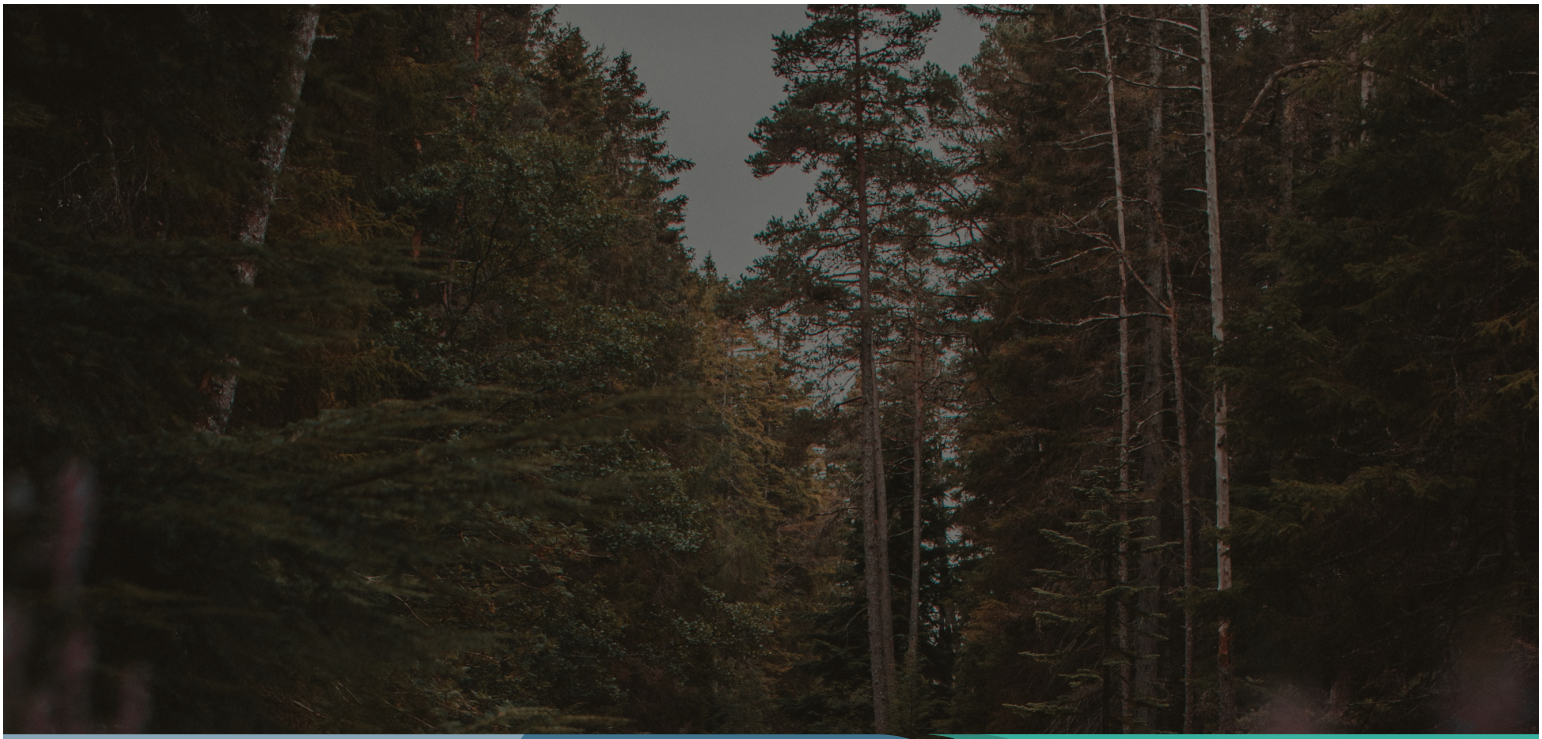


ISO Sub-National Code (Provinces and Territories)

Province / Territory	ISO Canadian Sub-National Code
Alberta	CA-AB
British Columbia	CA-BC
Manitoba	CA-MB
New Brunswick	CA-NB
Newfoundland and Labrador	CA-NL
Northwest Territories	CA-NT
Nova Scotia	CA-NS
Nunavut	CA-NU
Ontario	CA-ON
Prince Edward Island	CA-PE
Quebec	CA-QC
Saskatchewan	CA-SK
Yukon	CA-YT



ToC



APPENDIX 14

WDPCA Source Table Details



WDPCA Source Table Details

ToC

(*extracted from UNEP-WCMC's User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas and world database on other effective area-based conservation measures: 1.6. (UNEP-WCMC 2019)*)

3.3. Source information

Both the WDPA and OECM database have a source table. Recording accurate source information in the WDPA and OECM database is important to ensure that ownership of the data is maintained and traceable. Source information includes details on the data provider and when the data were last updated. This information is stored in the WDPA and OECM database Source Tables, and linked to the attribute data by the 'Metadata ID'. A data submission will only be accepted if the source information is provided.

The Source Tables conform to the minimum geographic information and services standards for metadata as described by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Guidance and definitions on the source information requirements can be found in Appendix 1. The source table also includes information on the party responsible for verifying the data, where relevant. This information is completed by UNEP-WCMC in collaboration with the data verifier.



ToC

Source Table Field	Field Code	Notes
Metadata ID	METADATAID	An ID assigned by UNEP-WCMC that is used to link each record in the WDPA or OECM database to the relevant source information in the Source Table.
Data Set Title	DATA_TITLE	The title of the dataset e.g. Protected Areas of Ireland; OECMs of South Africa.
Responsible Party	RESP_PARTY	The data provider, i.e. the organisation, national government, or other actor that claims ownership of the data or that is providing the data on behalf of their owner. 'Not Reported' is used when this information is not available (applies only to older data in need of update).
Responsible Party Contact E-mail(s)	RESP_EMAIL	Contact e-mail address of the organisation listed as the responsible party which maintains the ownership of the data or that is providing the data on behalf of its owner. "Not Reported" is used when this information is not available (applies only to older data in need of update). [Not shared publicly]
Verifying Party	VERIFIER	The organisation, national government or other actor that has verified the data. For information submitted prior to the introduction of this attribute in March 2015 this field is assigned a value of 'None'.
Verifying Party Contact Email(s)	V_EMAIL	Contact e-mail address of person(s) and organisations) responsible for verifying the data. For information submitted prior to the introduction of this attribute in March 2015 this field is assigned a value of 'None'. [Not shared publicly]
Year	YEAR	The year when the dataset was first submitted to the WDPA or OECM database. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available (applies only to older data in need of update).
Update Year	UPDATE_YR	The year in which dataset was last updated in the WDPA or OECM database.
Dataset Language	LANGUAGE	Language(s) used within the dataset. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Dataset Character Set	CHAR_SET	Full name of the character coding standard used in the dataset. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Coordinate System Text (string)	REF_SYSTEM	Name and parameters of the coordinate system of the original dataset including, where applicable, datum, ellipsoid or projection. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not
Scale	SCALE	The scale of the dataset used when the data was originally created (digitized, surveyed, etc.). The denominator of the representative traction on a source map, for example on a scale of 1:150000 the denominator given should be 150000. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Lineage	LINEAGE	Information about the creation, events, changes or transformations in the life of a dataset including the process used to create and maintain the dataset and associated dates. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Citation	CITATION	Recommended text to be used when referencing the dataset. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.
Disclaimer	DISCLAIMER	Warnings/exceptions to use of the data. 'Not Reported' is used when these data are not available.

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CORVUS CENTRE
for Conservation Policy
Applying Research for Conservation Solutions

The Corvus Centre for Conservation Policy is a not-for-profit, charitable organization based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Our mission is to ensure nature conservation is advanced through evidence-based land use, resource management, and financial decision making.

We pursue our mission through applied research and program facilitation, and by catalyzing critical dialogues.

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