

How Pew Supports Canada's Efforts in Conservation and Nonpartisan Information

Protection of critical environmental resources, public opinion research among top priorities

Overview

The Pew Charitable Trusts works in the United States, the European Union, and nations around the world to encourage responsive government and support scientific research, using data to make a difference on a wide range of issues, including global ocean governance, criminal justice reform, and antibiotic resistance. Pew's mission is to improve public policy, inform the public, and invigorate civic life.

In Canada, Pew promotes science- and community-based conservation work to help preserve important stretches of natural environment, while also advancing sustainable economic development and exploring Canadians' demographic trends, opinions, and attitudes on a range of issues. The nation's geography offers an abundant diversity of natural resources and is home to countless species of wildlife. Yet this biological richness and the traditional cultures it supports are facing complex ecological challenges. Pew's work seeks to safeguard the long-term health and majestic beauty of Canada's environment for generations to come.

Key initiatives

Boreal conservation:

Since 2000, Pew has played a critical role in efforts to conserve Canada's 485 million-hectare (1.2 billion-acre) boreal forest—the biggest intact forest and wetland ecosystem remaining on Earth. This largely unspoiled expanse supports the world's most extensive network of pure lakes, rivers, and wetlands and provides nesting or migratory refuge for nearly half of all bird species commonly found in the U.S. and Canada.

As a founding member of the International Boreal Conservation Campaign, Pew partners with scientists, conservationists, Indigenous communities, and business and civic leaders who share a vision of protecting and sustaining the natural, cultural, and economic resources of the boreal region for future generations. Pew's work in support of that vision has been guided by the science-based Canadian Boreal Conservation Framework, finalized in 2003, which recommends conserving at least half of the boreal lands through new parks and protected areas and requiring responsible and sustainable management for the remainder.

Pew has partnered with dozens of Indigenous communities on local and regional land use planning, providing both technical expertise and financial resources. In these plans, communities determine for themselves where to create protected areas, build infrastructure, and conduct sustainable development. This leads to both enhanced conservation on the ground and greater certainty for industry in the region. Pew and its partners have actively supported local and regional Indigenous land use planning efforts that span more than 120 million hectares (300 million acres) across Canada's boreal region.

The trends bode well, promising to eventually make Canada's boreal the most protected forest on Earth.

Ocean conservation:

Off the coasts, Pew similarly works to protect the rich diversity of life in Canada's oceans. Together, the nation's Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic coasts give Canada the world's longest shoreline and jurisdiction over approximately 5.75 million square kilometers (2.2 million square miles) of vast, diverse marine habitat. This biodiversity and abundance support thousands of coastal and inland communities, including Indigenous people whose cultures have been sustained by Canada's oceans for millennia.

Since 2009, Pew has played a critical role supporting Inuit efforts to secure marine protections for the Canadian Arctic and adjacent international waters. In the face of unprecedented warming and melting ice, Pew and its partners are working to protect valuable Arctic habitat and cultural marine areas by preventing industrial fishing in newly accessible areas until science determines that such activity safely could take place, supporting Indigenous protected areas, advocating for world-class oil and gas standards, and creating safe shipping corridors.

In 2018, Pew also began supporting policies to advance protections for ocean habitats and vulnerable marine species in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In partnership with Canadian and Indigenous governments, scientists, and fishing organizations, Pew promotes the creation of marine protected areas and efforts to rebuild depleted species, advance collaborative management, reduce bycatch of marine mammals and other species, and protect marine biodiversity.

Public opinion research:

The Pew Research Center, a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, studies unfolding global attitudes and demographic trends and helps policymakers and the public prepare for future challenges. The center has conducted public opinion research since 1991, including polling Canadians on a range of topics, such as their attitudes toward climate change, religion, current affairs, and other important issues of the day, but it does not take policy positions.

Editor's note: This fact sheet was updated on July 27, 2023, to correct the number of square kilometers of marine habitat under Canada's jurisdiction.

For further information, please visit:

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The Pew Charitable Trusts is driven by the power of knowledge to solve today's most challenging problems. Pew applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public, and invigorate civic life.