

# Ecological Corridors



## What are Ecological Corridors?

**Ecological corridors** are defined spaces that aim to maintain or restore **ecological connectivity**, which is the free movement of species and the flow of natural processes that sustain life on earth<sup>1</sup>.

There are three main types of corridors:



- 1 Linear Corridors:**  
Unbroken strips of habitat<sup>2</sup>



- 2 Stepping Stone Corridors:**  
Small, scattered patches of habitat<sup>2</sup>



- 3 Landscape Corridors:**  
An uninterrupted patchwork of landscape features<sup>2</sup>

## Fundamental Principles of Ecological Corridors

Ecological corridors complement protected and conserved areas. Together, these elements form ecological networks for conservation. **Ecological networks** are a web of core conservation areas (protected and conserved areas) connected with ecological corridors.<sup>1</sup> Corridors should be created where ecological connectivity is needed, and have a management plan with specific objectives to achieve this connectivity. Corridors can allow human activities, so long as they support connectivity.<sup>1</sup>

## Ecological Corridors Are Important Because They:

- 1** Help species adapt to climate change
- 2** Lessen the impact of human development on natural habitats
- 3** Improve the ecological integrity of protected and conserved areas
- 4** Connect various habitat types needed for species' different life stages, including migration
- 5** Support vital ecosystem services like food, air, nutrients, and water cycles
- 6** Promote human-wildlife coexistence and ways for people to connect with nature

### LEGEND

 Protected and Conserved Area

 Ecological Corridor



## Parks Canada's National Program for Ecological Corridors Objectives

- Collaborate with other levels of government, Indigenous partners, experts, and stakeholders
- Develop national criteria for ecological corridors that protect and restore ecological connectivity
- Identify and map priority areas where ecological corridors would halt and reverse biodiversity loss across Canada
- Support on-the-ground work for corridors through funding towards conservation, restoration, and management
- Inspire others to take measures in support of ecological connectivity and corridors
- Promote and advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples through weaving of knowledge systems and opportunities for land stewardship and connection

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### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Hilty, J., et al. (2020). Guidelines for conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 30. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

<sup>2</sup> "Ecological Corridors and Biodiversity." *Sicirec - Sistemas De Circulación Ecológica*, <http://www.sicirec.org/definiciones/corridors>.