



INDICATOR: PROVINCIAL EXPENDITURE ON BIODIVERSITY AND CHARITABLE GIVING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIC DIRECTION: Engage People

TARGET: n/a

THEME: Conservation Response – Financing Biodiversity Conservation

Background Information:

Biodiversity conservation is supported through public spending, charitable giving by individuals, and donations and management activities of business and industry, Aboriginal communities and conservation groups. While certain programs and activities have obvious benefits to biodiversity, for example the maintenance of a protected areas system, many more activities have either direct or indirect relevance to biodiversity. Some examples include pollution monitoring and prevention, environmental assessments for large projects such as highways, mitigating the effects of climate change, sustainable forest management, and the management of the agricultural landscape and support for best management practices on farms. Specific activities may protect or enhance biodiversity, or monitor and assess impacts of natural and anthropogenic processes.

This indicator assesses trends in the absolute and relative amounts of resources allocated to biodiversity conservation from three primary funding sources: the provincial public sector, conservation authorities and charitable giving of individuals. As the largest funder of the environmental not-for-profit sector in Ontario, environmental grants made by the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) were also assessed (OTF 2007).

Data Analysis:

For the public sector, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change were chosen because the majority of their programs align with activities relevant to biodiversity. Total expenditure estimates for these ministries and the Ontario government were obtained from estimates provided by the Ministry of Finance (OMOF 2014a). Most conservation authorities invest in a broad array of biodiversity conservation and monitoring programs across southern Ontario and parts of the north. Information on expenditures by conservation authorities was obtained from Conservation Ontario. Trends in charitable giving were assessed for environment-related donations based on Statistics Canada surveys conducted for 2004, 2007 and 2010 (Hall et al. 2006, 2009, Turcotte 2012). Information on OTF environmental grants was obtained from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

To place the level of support for biodiversity conservation in context, trends in Ontario's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) were examined using the Ontario Economic Accounts (OMOF 2014b). To account for inflation all monetary values reported have been adjusted to 2002 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index (Bank of Canada 2014).

Any evaluation of expenditure and financial resources faces several challenges, including the possibility of double counting and the lack of a direct relationship between expenditures and benefits for



biodiversity. Some of the variability in the expenditures of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry relate to evolving mandates (loss and inclusion of some forestry-related funding) and variation in forest fire fighting expenses. It is also important to note that not all of the expenditures from the provincial ministries selected or charitable donations to the environment provide direct benefits to Ontario's biodiversity. For these reasons, this indicator has been deliberately narrowly scoped, knowing that additional support for biodiversity management and conservation is provided through other means (e.g., businesses, academia, conservation organizations) and exists in the programs of other government ministries. Information on environment-related expenditures of federal ministries and agencies in Ontario was not available for inclusion in this indicator at this time.

Results:

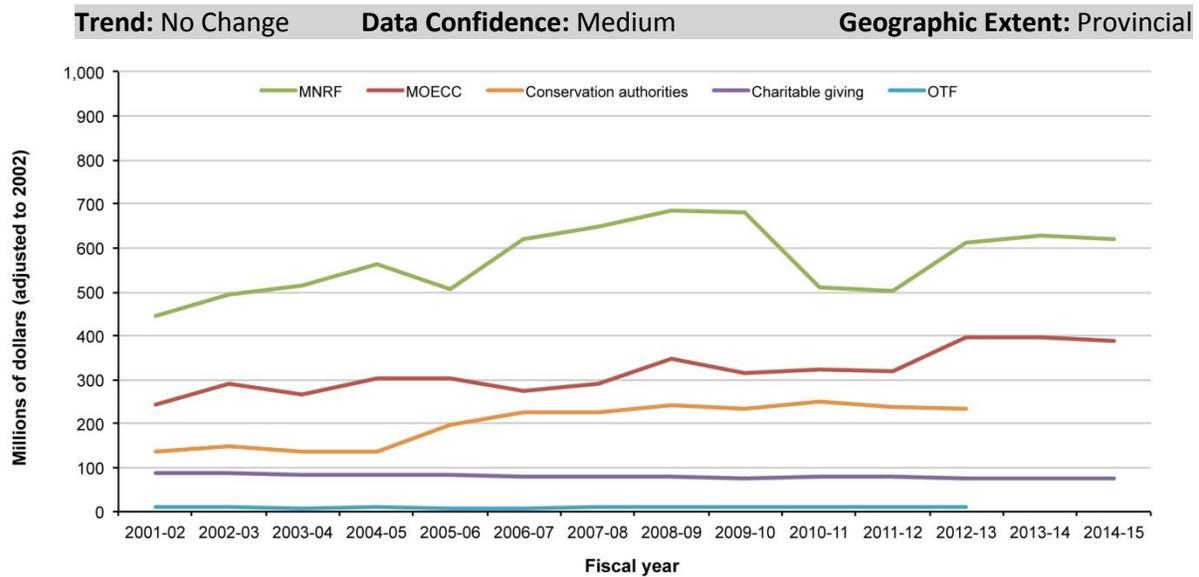


Figure 1. Provincial expenditures (adjusted to 2002 dollars) of Ontario ministries with biodiversity mandates, conservation authorities, charitable giving to the environment and environmental grants by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

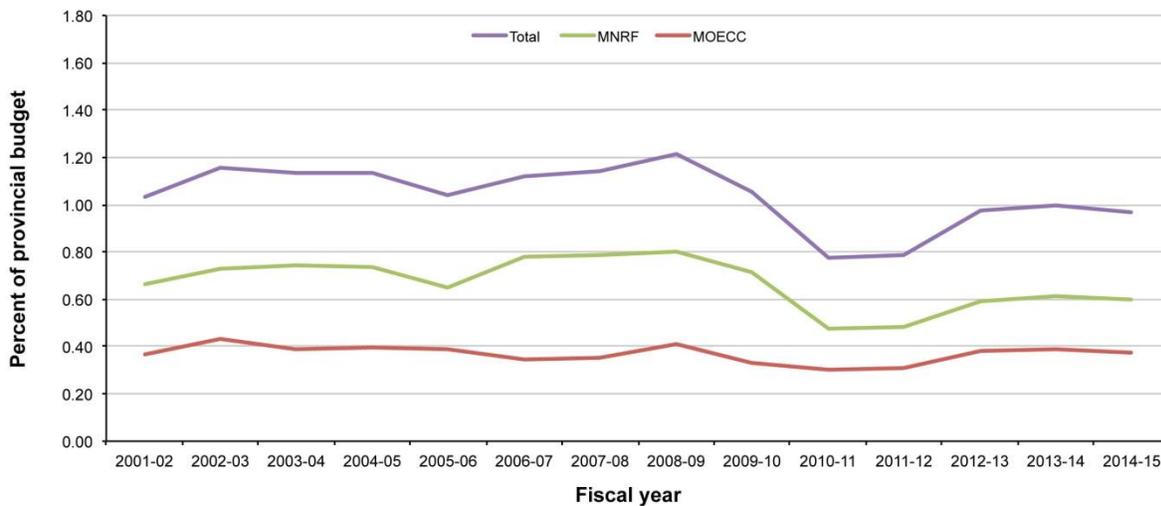


Figure 2. Percent of total provincial budget allocated to Ontario ministries with biodiversity mandates.

Status:

- From 2001-02 to 2014-15, expenditures of the biodiversity-related provincial ministries increased by 47% when adjusted to 2002 dollars. The total provincial budget increased by 57% during this period.
- Over the last 5 years, indexed expenditures of these ministries have decreased by 1.5% while the provincial budget has increased by 10%.
- Between 2001-02 and 2014-15, the provincial ministries most directly involved in biodiversity conservation and management were allocated 0.8 – 1.2% of the total provincial budget (average 1.0%). There has been a slight decrease over the last 5-year period.
- Total expenditures by conservation authorities increased by 71% between 2001 and 2012 and have remained relatively steady over the most recent 5-year period.
- Based on surveys conducted in 2004, 2007 and 2010, charitable donations by Ontarians to environmental activities amount to \$88 to \$95 million annually with a decrease in adjusted value in each successive survey. OTF environmental grants increased by 10% between 2001-02 and 2012-13 when indexed for inflation (from \$9.9 million to \$10.9 million).
- For perspective, it is important to note that over the period 2001 to 2013, Ontario's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from \$470 billion to \$553 billion in constant (consumer inflation-adjusted) dollars. Allocation of resources to biodiversity management and conservation from the provincial public sector, conservation authorities, the OTF and charitable giving averaged 0.20% of Ontario's GDP over this period.

Links:

Related Targets: N/A

Related Themes: N/A



Web Links:

Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change <http://www.ontario.ca/ministry-environment-and-climate-change>

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry <http://www.ontario.ca/ministry-natural-resources-forestry>

Conservation Ontario <http://www.conservation-ontario.on.ca/>

Ontario Trillium Foundation <http://www.otf.ca/en/>

References:

Bank of Canada. 2014. Inflation calculator. Bank of Canada, Ottawa, ON. [Available at: <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/> (date accessed: July 4, 2014)]

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Hall, M., D. Lasby, S. Ayer, and W.D. Gibbons. 2009. Caring Canadians, involved Canadians: highlights from the 2007 Canada survey of giving, volunteering and participating. Statistics Canada, Ottawa, ON.

OMOF (Ontario Ministry of Finance). 2014a. Expenditure estimates. Ministry of Finance, Toronto, ON. [Available at: <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/estimates/> (date accessed: July 3, 2014)]

OMOF (Ontario Ministry of Finance). 2014b. Ontario economic accounts. Ministry of Finance, Toronto, ON [available: <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/ecaccts/> (date accessed: July 8, 2014)].

OTF (Ontario Trillium Foundation). 2007. The environment sector in Ontario. Ontario Trillium Foundation Research Brief – 104, Toronto, ON.

Turcotte, M. 2012. Charitable giving by Canadians. Statistics Canada — Catalogue no. 11-008, Ottawa, ON.

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Ontario Biodiversity Council. 2015. State of Ontario's Biodiversity [web application]. Ontario Biodiversity Council, Peterborough, Ontario. [Available at: <http://ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca/sobr> (Date Accessed: May 19, 2015)].