

# Canada caribou herds, habitat continue to decline: report

October 31 2017

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Ten of the 51 herds of caribou in Canada, made up of animals like this one seen in a German zoo in September 2016, have a stable population, while 20 have seen their numbers dwindle

Canada has failed boreal caribou herds that are at risk of disappearing, a government report concluded Tuesday.

Their [habitat](#) stretches across nine provinces and territories, on mostly

government lands.

Governments in each of these regions were mandated in 2012 to come up with recovery strategies for the animals.

But the Environment Canada report found that none of them met an October 5, 2017 deadline for completing their range plans.

"Overall, the report shows that some progress was made by governments and industry, in the past five years. However, [caribou](#) populations continue to decline and habitat disturbance continues to increase," said a statement by Environment Minister Catherine McKenna's office.

"The report emphasizes the need for us all to do more," it said.

Going forward, the federal [government](#) said it would "accelerate efforts to protect boreal caribou."

Habitat conditions affect the caribou's survival and reproduction, which ultimately determines whether or not a population will survive.

According to the report, habitat disturbances from mostly human activities including forestry and mining, as well as wildfires have increased in two-thirds of the caribou ranges since 2012.

Trend data shows 10 of the 51 herds have a stable population while 20 have seen their numbers dwindle.

No data was submitted by the Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Newfoundland on the other 21 herds.

Greenpeace blasted the regional governments' inaction, calling the [report](#) a "wake-up call for (them) to take action while there is still time."

"The iconic Canadian species has been listed as threatened for the last 15 years and it is clear that much more efforts are needed."

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