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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Strategic Plan of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation 2011-2015.

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is particularly supportive of Strategic Objective #2: Increased resilience of shared ecosystems at risk. We recognize that CEC has invested in sustainable use and biodiversity conservation in the past. Taking a trilateral approach to supporting an ecosystem approach to conservation will continue to pay dividends. The CCA believes that to be particularly true in the North American grasslands ecosystem.

CCA believes that the initiatives suggested in this strategy specifically sharing best management practices is an effective and efficient approach to sustaining biodiversity and improving economic performance of local communities.

CCA is fostering a relationship network with provincial forage and cattle associations to deliver programs such as the Grazing Mentorship which focuses on improving grass management to increase ecosystem function. One of the proposed next steps has been to build a biodiversity module to fit the GM program. To that end we have been opening and strengthening communication lines with conservation partners. It would be useful to explore our mutual interests in the conservation of the North American grasslands.