



# Convention on Biological Diversity – Target 19

## Visitation trends in Canadian park systems



Federal and provincial park systems use a variety of statistics (what/who is counted) to measure visitation, due in part to operational needs and geographical complexities by jurisdiction. Despite the difference in reported statistics, recent patterns suggest people are getting out and enjoying nature across the country.

Over the last five years (2002 to 2016), federal and provincial park systems have generally seen stable or positive overall growth in visitation. Most jurisdictions have seen double digit growth in the last five years.

**Table 1: Percent change**

| System | Statistic*       | Baseline   | Change over 2012 baseline |       |      |      |      |
|--------|------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
|        |                  | 2012-13    | 2013                      | 2014  | 2015 | 2016 | 5 yr |
| NL     | Camping nights   | 64,173     | 3%                        | -2%   | 0%   | 0%   | 0%   |
| NB     | Total visits     | 81,323     | -1%                       | -1%   | 11%  | 19%  | 19%  |
| NS     | Camper nights    |            |                           |       |      |      |      |
| PE     | Camping nights   |            |                           |       |      |      |      |
| QC     | Visit days       | 6,128,920  | -5%                       | -5%   | 11%  | 17%  | 17%  |
| ON     | Visitors         | 9,193,538  | -7%                       | -7%   | 8%   | 15%  | 15%  |
| MB     | Vehicle visitors | 5,010,919  | 9%                        | -9%   | 2%   | 15%  | 15%  |
| SK     | Visitor days     | 3,562,694  | 6%                        | 6%    | 9%   | 12%  | 12%  |
| AB     | Day use visitors | 7,900,000  | 8%                        | -5%** | 11%  | 23%  | 23%  |
| BC     | Visitors         |            |                           |       |      |      |      |
| Canada | Person visits    | 12,722,828 | 0%                        | 6%    | 14%  | 21%  | 21%  |

**Table 2: General trends**

|        |                  | 2012-13    | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 5 yr |
|--------|------------------|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| NL     | Camping nights   | 64,173     | ↑    | →    | →    | →    | →    |
| NB     | Total visits     | 81,323     | →    | →    | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    |
| NS     | Camper nights    |            |      |      |      |      |      |
| PE     | Camping nights   |            |      |      |      |      |      |
| QC     | Visit days       | 6,128,920  | ↓    | ↓    | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    |
| ON     | Visitors         | 9,193,538  | ↓    | ↓    | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    |
| MB     | Vehicle visitors | 5,010,919  | ↑    | ↓    | →    | ↑    | ↑    |
| SK     | Visitor days     | 3,562,694  | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    |
| AB     | Day use visitors | 7,900,000  | ↑    | ↓*   | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    |
| BC     | Visitors         |            |      |      |      |      |      |
| Canada | Person visits    | 12,722,828 | →    | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    | ↑    |

Canada = Parks Canada (national parks and national marine conservation areas only)

\*Visitation will include Canadians (in province and out-of-province residents) and international visitors. For example, on average, market draw at national parks/marine areas is 80% domestic and 20% international

\*\* = decline in Alberta (2014) is due to facility/park closures resulting from extensive floods in parts of the province in 2013

**Table 1:**

% change = visitation in year X compared to 2012 baseline (e.g., 2013 vs 2012, 2014 vs 2012)

5 yr change = 2016-17 vs 2012-13

Blanks = unavailable at time of submission

**Table 2:**

Stable (→) = +/- 2%

5 yr: Yellow = stable; Green = growth; Blue = decline

**Data Source:**

Visitation supplied by provincial and federal park agencies/departments.

**Prepared by:**

Parks Canada for Environment Canada and Climate Change. Data is supplied by provincial and federal park agencies in support of Target 19 (Connecting Canadians with Nature).  
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