Biodiversity and ecosystems

GRI 304-2

SDG 9, SDG 15

The majority of network infrastructure that powers Bell's services is located outdoors, whether aerially, underground or underwater. Bell teams work outside in the natural environment every day to install, maintain, repair and decommission network infrastructure. These activities can have a potentially negative impact on the natural and human environment.

To protect biodiversity and Canadian ecosystems, Bell diligently oversees its Biodiversity and Ecosystem Interference program that governs network projects, by responsibly managing its interference with natural habitats and environmentally sensitive areas. We pay special attention to mitigating biosphere integrity degradation and land-system change impacts by studying each network project and assessing the potential environmental impacts.

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Network impacts

Bell's telecommunication network infrastructure is deployed across different territories. The network sub-program aims to ensure our operational practices respect applicable laws and regulations, including, but not limited to:

- Conducting environmental assessments
- Obtaining applicable work permits and authorizations and complying with them
- Mitigating environmental impacts
- Complying with air and noise emission limits

The sub-program management frameworks and procedures are embedded in Bell's operational practices, including a project approval review process during which potential environmental impacts are avoided or mitigated prior to project construction. Avoiding harm to wildlife, vegetation, water and soil is a key consideration taken into account at every stage of a network project, including planning, design, construction, maintenance and decommissioning of installations.

Inspections are conducted regularly on a sample of network projects to validate compliance with laws, regulations and Bell's standards. Internal audits of network projects are also conducted annually by Bell's Corporate Responsibility & Environment governance team to validate these same criteria and compliance, with respect to the company's engagement and commitments.

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Tree management

Bell strives to protect Canadian wildlife in a number of ways, as our network infrastructure interacts directly with the natural environment. Our documented responsible tree management practices are required to be followed by all network employees and contractors. These practices include taking steps to minimize tree trimming, cutting and clearing during network deployment, while maintaining network integrity. In the interest of protecting biodiversity, employees are educated through our tree management framework about how and when trees can be pruned and how wood residues should be handled.

In 2022, Bell launched a new partnership with Tree Canada, a national non-profit organization dedicated to planting and nurturing trees in rural and urban environments, to celebrate National Tree Day. On September 21st, Bell's employees helped plant 3,500 trees across Canada. Bell is excited to continue initiating and participating in tree planting activities across the country and contributing to Canada's 2 Billion Trees Program.

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Pest management

In order to ensure the integrity of Bell's network as well as the safety of employees and community members, it is important that Bell controls the proliferation of vegetation, insects and small animals that can pose a risk to our networks and employees. To address these issues, Bell's pest management framework establishes guidelines for indoor and outdoor pest control, in compliance with applicable legislation and best practices. The pest management framework is embedded into Bell's Biodiversity sub-program.

Except in emergency situations, Bell requires that physical and mechanical methods be prioritized over any other methods to control the spread of pests. Bell permits the use of pesticides in extenuating circumstances and/or only once physical and mechanical methods have proven to be unsuccessful.

Future outlook

Bell is committed to continue maintaining a rigorous Biodiversity and Ecosystem Interference management program that prioritizes avoiding environmental harm, working in harmony with nature and ensuring that respectful interactions with wildlife are maintained.

We expect to increase our engagement with initiatives that proactively protect Canadian biodiversity and ecosystems. More specifically, we aim to maintain and expand our commitment to protecting biodiversity by expanding our tree planting efforts and improving our interactions with protected and endangered species.

To the extent this information sheet contains forward-looking statements including, without limitation, outlooks, plans, objectives, goals, targets, strategic priorities, commitments, undertakings and other statements that do not refer to historical facts, these statements are not guarantees of future performance or events, and we caution you against relying on any of these forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are subject to inherent risks and uncertainties and are based on assumptions that give rise to the possibility that actual results or events could differ materially from our expectations expressed in, or implied by, such forward-looking statements. Refer to BCE Inc.'s most recent annual management's discussion and analysis (MD&A), as updated in BCE Inc.'s subsequent quarterly MD&As, for further information on such risks, uncertainties and assumptions. BCE Inc.'s MD&As are available on its website at bce.ca, on SEDAR at sedar.com and on EDGAR at sec.gov.

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