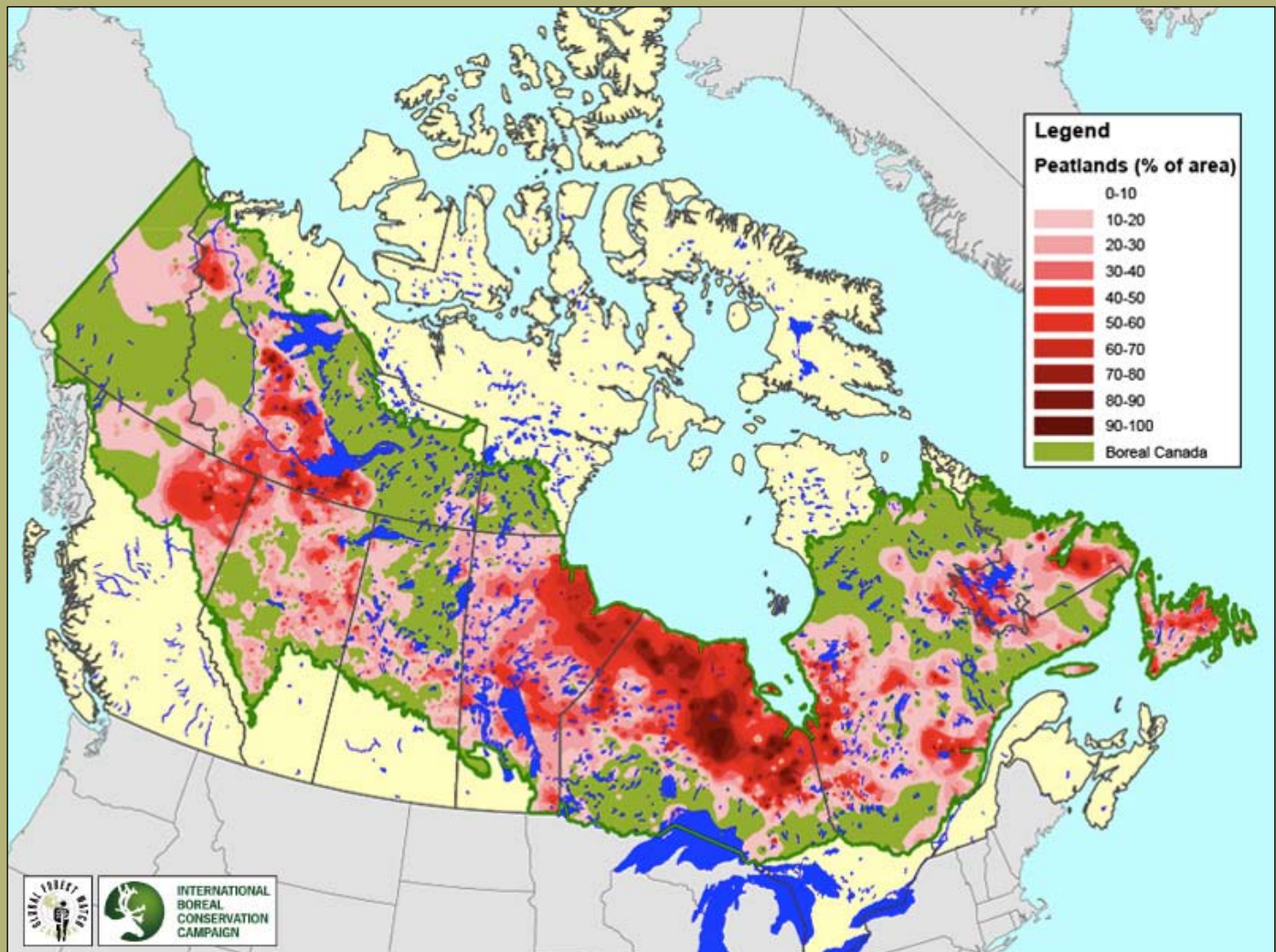


Carbon Storage in Canada's Boreal Forest



Map prepared by Global Forest Watch Canada for the International Boreal Conservation Campaign and Natural Resources Defense Council. Data Source: Tarnocai, C., I.M. Kettles and B. Lacelle. 2002. Peatlands of Canada Database. Geological Survey of Canada, Open File 4002

Peatlands Extent in Boreal Canada

Peatlands are recognized worldwide as highly important for carbon storage. Although they cover only 3% of the world's land area, peatlands contain almost 30% of all carbon stored on land. Peat is formed when decaying plant matter from mosses, sedges, grasses, shrubs, or trees accumulates in permanently waterlogged conditions. When left undisturbed, peatlands can effectively store the carbon sequestered in these plants for thousands of years.

Canada has the largest area of peatlands in the world, encompassing 12 percent of the nation's land area. Canada's peatlands stretch from Newfoundland to the Northwest Territories, with especially high concentrations found in northern Ontario and Manitoba. These peatlands are essential to the global environment because they retain, purify, and deliver fresh water; store carbon; absorb pollutants; and support numerous species of unique plants and wildlife.

Interpolation of data: Percentage of peatlands in Canada is presented as a smooth contour interpolation for cartographic reasons only. Peatlands of Canada map shapefile (of4002.shp) was converted from soil landscape polygon units into a point file by polygon centroids. The points were then interpolated into a grid by Natural Neighbor (NN). The grid files were reclassified into 10 equal interval classes (0-100%) and then converted into a shape file.