

Managing the fur industry as a renewable resource is of prime importance if the flow of furs is to be maintained. Conservation policies by federal, provincial and territorial governments have been highly effective and statistics, collected since 1919, indicate that production of all the important species is being well maintained. In this connection it should be noted that pelt production figures are not a completely accurate means of assessing the fur-bearer population. The number of pelts taken in any one season depends on many factors including the abundance or otherwise of fur bearers, including cyclic species, plus economic factors such as fur prices and the availability of alternative sources of revenue in the northern areas. Nevertheless, in the absence of any inventory of the fur bearers, pelt production data, maintained over a number of years, provide an indication of the status of the wildlife population. Any long-term decline in numbers would certainly be reflected in progressively smaller catches of any given species. Certainly in no case does the seed stock appear to be endangered.

Since at least 1950 trapline coverage has tended to be incomplete and pelt production figures for many species do not represent optimum harvests. Notwithstanding the imperfect

