Ecological regions are areas of general similarity in ecosystems and, as such, their size, shape, and quality of environmental and socioeconomic management, and ensuring conservation and restoration strategies. They are intended for the national and regional scale of the environment, economic, and social development, as well as the development of a broad understanding of regional and large continental ecosystems. The development of a broad understanding of regional and large continental ecosystems is critical for evaluating ecological risk, development of a clear understanding of regional and large ecosystems, and in the type, quality, and quantity of environmental management, as well as the development of strategies to be formulated.

Ecological classification is based on biodiversity—ecosystem class boundaries are defined at various levels. Each classification integrates knowledge, and is not an overlay. It recognizes that ecosystems are interactive—characteristics of one ecosystem blend with those of another. Ecological classification is based on hierarchy—ecosystems are nested within each other. This hierarchical scheme has been adopted for ecological regions. Ecological classification is based on the level of generalization.

The maps show a second attempt to be ecologically: clearly defined and test ecological regions across the North American continent (Commission for Environmental Cooperation). The maps from 1997 and 2006 used the same ecological regions identified independently under the requirements of the broad regional ecosystem development. The 1997 map, recognized the need to map a single region to cover small, regional, ecological region which is the same as the general region in Canada. The original ecological regions that have been delineated are intended to provide a common framework for the large ecological region within a level I region. Level II ecological regions are those regions that have been delineated to the level II region. Level III ecological regions are the level III ecological region map displayed in various scales. These maps represent the working group's best consensus on the regional and large ecological ecosystem.

Determining ecological regions at a continental level is a challenging task. It is difficult, in part, because physical and environmental factors that influence ecosystems are not confined to biogeographic boundaries. Determining and outlining a framework of North American ecological regions is a complex task that requires the recognition of the interactions between biogeographic, map, provincial, and territorial regions. The study involved developing a framework of North American ecological regions. The level III ecological region map depicts ecological regions that have been delineated to the level II region. These ecological regions are nested within the level I regions. Level II ecological regions are those ecological regions that have been delineated to the level II region. Level III ecological regions are the level III ecological region map displayed in various scales.

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Three maps present the working group's best consensus on the delineation and characteristics of major ecological regions on all three levels throughout the North American continent. The maps depict a comprehensive, consistent, and ecologically meaningful approach to mapping ecological regions.