

# Response Statement - Seaside Centipede Lichen

January 10, 2022

**Common Name:** Seaside Centipede Lichen

**Scientific Name:** *Heterodermia sitchensis*

**Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC):** Threatened

**How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment:** On 2021-10-12, the Minister of the Environment received the COSEWIC reassessment of the Seaside Centipede Lichen, which concluded its status has changed to Threatened; it was previously assessed as Endangered and is listed as such on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*. Within 24 months of this date, the Minister will seek to obtain a Governor in Council decision on whether or not to amend the List for this species, or whether to refer the matter back to COSEWIC for further information or consideration. A summary of the consultations and an analysis of why the order is appropriate will be provided. During the normal consultation period the Minister of Environment will consult with the government of British Columbia, Indigenous peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Seaside Centipede Lichen should have its Schedule 1 status of Endangered changed to Threatened, or whether the matter should be referred back to COSEWIC.

Once a species has been assessed by COSEWIC, further steps must be undertaken before it is added to Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*. For more information on this process, please view [The Species Listing Process Under SARA](#).

**Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC:** This leafy lichen is known from 20 occurrences on the west coast of Vancouver Island, Canada, and from two in the US. It has highly specific habitat requirements and grows only on partially defoliated small-diameter Sitka Spruce twigs on trees, close to the shoreline, that often receive nitrogen enrichment from sea lion haul-out sites or bird nest sites. The number of mature individuals (thalli) is thought to be less than 1000, and the lichen is highly vulnerable to intense storm activity associated with climate change that destroys the twigs upon which the lichen is found. The change of status from Endangered reflects increased knowledge of the distribution as a result of increased survey effort.

**Occurrence:** British Columbia

**Competent Minister(s):**

Minister of Environment

Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency

**Province(s) and territory (territories) to be consulted:**

British Columbia

**Other applicable legislation:** When the species is found within national parks of Canada or other lands administered by the Parks Canada Agency, it is protected or managed under the *Canada National Parks Act* or through measures or management tools available to the Parks Canada Agency under other legislation.

**Conservation activities underway:** The Seaside Centipede Lichen (*Heterodermia sitchensis*) is included in the Multi-species Action Plan for Pacific Rim National Park Reserve of Canada that is published as final on the Species at Risk Registry. The Recovery Strategy for the Seaside Centipede Lichen (*Heterodermia sitchensis*) in Canada is also published as final on the Species at Risk Registry. The legal protection statement for the critical habitat of Seaside Centipede Lichen (*Heterodermia sitchensis*) in Pacific Rim National Park Reserve of Canada is also published on the Species at Risk Registry.