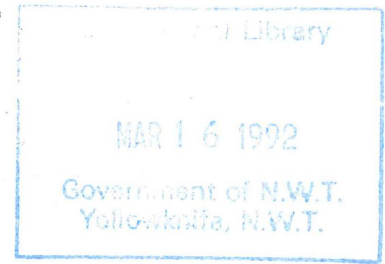


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CANADA FOREST ACCORD

OUR FORESTS

The forest symbolizes Canada. Besides covering half the Canadian landscape, some 453 million hectares, forests are a dominant feature of our economy, culture, traditions and history. They are a critical element of our aspirations as a society and as a nation.

Canada's forests are crucial components of our natural environment. Canada has 10 per cent of the world's forests, which provide an important protective element of 20 per cent of the world's fresh water. They provide habitat for wildlife, moderate the climate and provide clean air and water. They prevent erosion of soil and regulate water flow. They act as a storehouse for carbon; as forests grow, they absorb greenhouse gases that can contribute to global warming. They provide natural and wilderness areas for the cultural, spiritual and recreational benefit of everyone in Canada.

Our forests are a natural resource whose care and stewardship is of interest to every Canadian and in a greater sense to all citizens of the world.

Much of Canada's original forest remains today. Of the 453 million hectares, 26.7 million are recognized as "heritage forests" and as such are protected by law to be left in their natural state. Another 24 million hectares are considered "conservation forests" protected from harvesting by policy. Commercial forests, both public and private, capable of producing timber along with a variety of other non-timber benefits, cover 209 million hectares. The balance of 193.3 million hectares, representing 42.6 per cent, is made up of open forests, comprised of natural areas of small trees, shrubs and muskeg.

Our forests form a vital part of our economy, supporting over 350 communities and providing jobs for over 800,000 Canadians. With 50 billion dollars of shipments annually, Canada is one of the world's largest suppliers of forest products. Our forests support a multibillion dollar tourism and recreation industry. Through sound forest management, a variety of timber and non-timber benefits may be produced from our forests on a sustainable basis to continue fulfilling this vital economic role.

Since 90 per cent of Canada's forests are publicly owned, all Canadians have a vital interest in their management. In Canada, forest management is the responsibility of the provinces. In the Northwest Territories, the responsibility for forest management has been transferred to the territorial government, while in the Yukon, this responsibility remains with the federal government. The federal government has direct or shared responsibility for industrial and regional development, trade, international relations, science and technology, the environment and federal lands. Canada's forest community, which includes those groups whose diverse interests form part of the needs and decision-making process, plays an important role and has also joined in developing this Accord.



WE BELIEVE:

- ✦ *Our forest heritage is part of our past, our present and our future identity as a nation.*
- ✦ *It is important to maintain a rich tapestry of forests across the Canadian landscape that sustains a diversity of wildlife.*
- ✦ *Healthy forest ecosystems are essential to the health of all life on earth.*
- ✦ *Continued economic benefits must be maintained for the communities, families and individual Canadians who depend upon the forest, both for their livelihood and way of life.*
- ✦ *The spiritual qualities and the inherent beauty of our forests are essential to our physical and our mental well-being.*
- ✦ *Our role as stewards is to ensure intelligent, sensitive use of the forest for the environmental, economic, social and cultural well-being of all Canadians.*
- ✦ *Canadians are entitled to participate in determining how their forests are used and the purpose for which they are managed.*

OUR VISION:

- ✦ *Our needs will be met through knowledge and cooperation and all measures within our means taken to ensure that healthy forests are passed on to future generations.*
- ✦ *We will fulfill our global responsibilities in the care and use of forests, maintaining their importance to the environment and the well-being of all living things.*
- ✦ *A strong economic base for forest products, tourism and recreation will be supported within a framework of sound ecological and environmental principles.*
- ✦ *Our forests will be managed on an integrated basis, supporting a full range of uses and values including timber production, habitat for wildlife, and areas allocated for parks and wilderness.*
- ✦ *Canadians will, in full knowledge of the environmental, economic, social and cultural values of the forest, participate in setting objectives for managing the resources.*
- ✦ *Advanced training, skills and education will be provided to those Canadians employed in forest-related activities, and stable, fulfilling employment opportunities will add to the quality of life in their communities.*
- ✦ *There will be clear and harmonious relationships for all those involved with forests, improving the effectiveness of conservation, management and industrial development, and bringing about agreement on approaches to forest management through consultation, mutual respect and the sharing of information.*

OUR COMMITMENT TO ACTION

Canadians have the knowledge and the expertise to fulfill their vision for their forests. Building upon these qualities, we commit ourselves to:

- * *Strengthening the foundations for conserving the natural diversity of our forests and putting in place the fundamental reporting systems to say where we stand.*
- * *Expanding our knowledge of our forests, refining the accuracy of our inventory information and broadening it to cover a wider range of plant and animal species. We will refine our planning and management practices to incorporate a wider range of forest uses and interests.*
- * *Reviewing our harvesting and silvicultural activities in the light of increased understanding of sustainable development. We will introduce new scientific tools to reduce losses from fires, and help forests resist insects and disease. We will refine our ability to ensure the continued productivity of the forest.*
- * *Establishing working models of sustainable forest management in all parts of Canada to serve as laboratories for advancing national as well as international knowledge and practices. Those who use or manage our forests will define their ethics and standards by committing to codes of practice for their organizations.*
- * *Increasing the opportunities for the Canadian public to have a greater say in how their forests are used and managed. We will cooperatively expand our capacity to provide the public with timely, accurate and balanced information on the state of forests and forestry issues in Canada.*
- * *Taking measures to support the long-term competitive position of the forest sector to help it make a greater contribution to our communities and to the Canadian economy as a whole.*
- * *Developing and applying new knowledge and technology to achieve sustainable forest management and a prosperous forest economy.*
- * *Examining our professional and technical education programs and modifying them where necessary. We will examine the training and educational needs of those who work in the forest sector, and introduce programs to meet those needs.*
- * *Establishing new partnerships that will reflect the importance of forests to Aboriginal people, maintain and enhance cultural and spiritual values, and facilitate expanded economic opportunities.*
- * *Encouraging private forest owners to manage and exercise stewardship of their lands to increase the environmental, economic and social benefits derived from private forests.*
- * *In recognition of our global responsibility, contributing to the conservation and wise use of forests worldwide through encouragement, leadership and the transfer of knowledge.*

OUR GOAL

SUSTAINABLE FORESTS: A CANADIAN COMMITMENT

OUR GOAL IS TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE LONG-TERM HEALTH OF OUR FOREST ECOSYSTEMS, FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL LIVING THINGS BOTH NATIONALLY AND GLOBALLY, WHILE PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



