

Forests and Local Economy

Forests have supported communities, families and individuals for centuries. Through direct employment, access to food supplies and as shelter, forests are an important component of everyday life. Whether comparing subsistence forestry in Mexico, or large-scale commercial forestry in Europe, forests have a profound effect on our everyday lives.



Photo: Falls Brook Centre

should be able to determine how sustainable an operation is depending on the amount of woodland plants that are growing in the area, whether soil is being lost by erosion, how much deadwood is left to return nutrients back to the soil, and how large a gap in the canopy has been made.

The **concept of sustainable forestry** has arisen from the idea of “sustained yield”: managing forests to provide a steady supply of timber and/or pulp. At the most basic level this entails managing trees to provide an unwavering level of tree fiber. As other forest values are recognized, management has shifted towards a broader view, and the need to ensure sustainability of all forest values, not just the economic ones.

Becoming acquainted with the signs of a healthy forest

The language used to describe sustainable forestry is sometimes quite technical, but by walking through an area where trees are being cut you

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate understanding of sustainable development and its implications for the environment;
2. Explain the significance of the global economy on economic renewal and the development of society;
3. Locate, evaluate, adapt, create and share information using a variety of sources and technologies.

Curriculum Entry Points: General Science & History classes; Grade 11 Resource Education; Grade 12 Environmental Science; Grade 12 Economics; Grade 11 Silviculture; Grade 12 Law.

Forest, Soil and Water Quality

In order to achieve “sustained yield” it is important to consider how a forest functions. If we hope to get the same quality of wood from a site we need to know what factors help it grow. The quality of soil is as important for forests as it is for gardens. The ability of the soil to hold nutrients, moisture and habitat for micro-organisms all contribute to the health of future trees and plants of the forest. If too many trees are removed for a particular ecosystem, erosion can occur and this loss of soil means a loss in future productivity and hence sustainability.

One way to observe what impact different tree cutting operations may have is to determine where water would flow out of the forested area- this may be a small stream or brook that flows through the forest. After a rainstorm, do you notice a sudden inflow of water that is muddy? This may be an indication that too many trees were removed and soil is being lost by erosion.

There are as many tools of sustainable forestry as there are definitions for the concept. Some of the more popular and accepted tools are: best management practices, certification and ecosystem-based management. Through different mechanisms and incentives these tools target different forest users, from woods workers, to plant managers, to forest planners.

Ultimately the forest benefits the most from sustainable forestry. Healthy, vibrant forests support natural and human communities, providing us with food, water and shelter. Sustainable forestry’s recognition of multiple, equally important forest values is opening the door for Non-timber Forest Products (like maple syrup, wreaths, and medicines), forests as carbon sinks and many other uses.

Do you know where your wood comes from?

Forest Certification and Sustainable Forestry

A growing number of consumers, concerned that their wood purchases contribute to the destruction of the world's forests, have started demanding that forest products come from well-managed forests.

The variation in forest types and habitats, management requirements, and forest values worldwide has resulted in the development of numerous certification schemes to satisfy the demands of consumers and needs of the forest industry. The main certification schemes operating in North America at present are the:

- Sustainable Forestry Initiative, a North American scheme developed by the American Forest and Paper Association
- Canadian Standards Association (CSA) scheme
- International Standards Organization 14001 scheme
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification, an internationally recognized scheme.

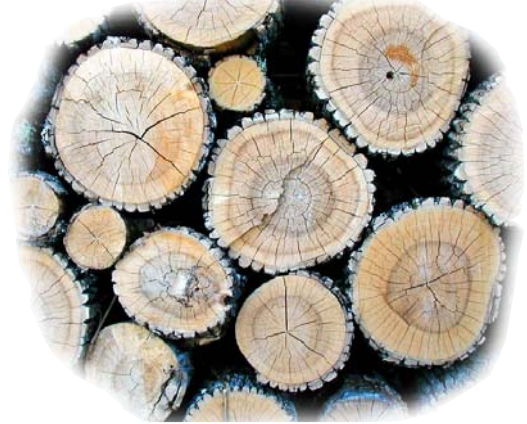


Photo: Leland Daugherty

Environmental management systems, such as ISO 14001, do not specifically address on-the-ground aspects of forest management, instead concentrating on the operational side of a business. SFI, CSA and FSC have on-the-ground indicators of sustainable forestry.

Many consumers feel third party independent verification offered by FSC guarantees that consumer products come from a well-managed forests that meet requirements for stakeholder consultation, management planning, habitat protection and numerous other social, environmental and economic criteria. The other schemes utilize second and first party verification, which utilizes internal mechanisms to verify that producers are meeting the requirements (criteria and indicators) of a scheme. *For more information on the mandate of the FSC see the info box at the bottom of this page.*

New Brunswick Forests and The Jaakko Poyry Report

In September 2001, the New Brunswick Forest Products Association, commissioned the Finnish-based Jaakko Poyry multinational consulting firm to examine how to double the annual allowable cut from New Brunswick crown lands. The Department of Natural Resources and Energy contributed \$150,000 to the study at the request of the forestry corporations to address questions on the future of Crown Land Management. The steering committee formed included a Deputy Minister from the Department of Natural Resources and Energy and senior officials from Nexfor Fraser Papers, UPM-Kymmene Miramichi and J.D. Irving Ltd, along with staff from Jaakko Poyry.

On December 11, 2002, the New Brunswick Forest Products Association released a public report based on the Jaakko Poyry study at a news conference. Calling it a "Blueprint for the Future," the study recommended that the government and corporations set binding targets to maximize the volume of balsam fir and spruce growing on Crown land in order to double the supply of spruce and fir fibre over 40 years through the conversion of 40 percent of the forest ecosystems on Crown land to plantations. The Jaakko Poyry study has put fiber production above all other values of habitat protection, wildlife, water protection, biodiversity conservation, and all the recreational and tourism use of the forests. To find out more about the report check out the Conservation Council of New Brunswick's website:

www.web.net/~ccnb.



Forest product certification is a voluntary, market based approach which provides consumers with an independent assessment of a forest operations management practices. By purchasing forest products which come from independently certified well-managed forests, consumers can demonstrate their support for forest stewardship practices worldwide.

“Forest certification is one way that forest companies can prove to people that the way they harvest does not damage the health of the forest or the stability and livelihoods of local communities”
(FSC Canada)

Our Vision is:

Healthy forests providing an equitable sharing of benefits from their use while respecting natural forest processes, biodiversity and harmony amongst their inhabitants.

Our Mission is:

To promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the forests of Canada through standards and their application.

New Brunswick Crown lands

Crown lands cover more than three million hectares of New Brunswick, are held in trust by the Province for the benefit of all people, including those not yet born according to the Supreme Court of Canada. As the land was never ceded to the Crown by the First Nations it is subject to a comprehensive land claim, as well as subject to aboriginal and treaty rights as enshrined in Canada's constitution. According to the courts, government must consult with First Nations about the use of Crown lands. This has not been the practice in New Brunswick. The Minister of Natural Resources and Energy also has statutory responsibilities to the people of New Brunswick in Section 3(1) of the Crown Lands and Forests Act which makes him or her responsible for the "development, utilizations, protection and **integrated management of the resources of Crown Lands . . .**"

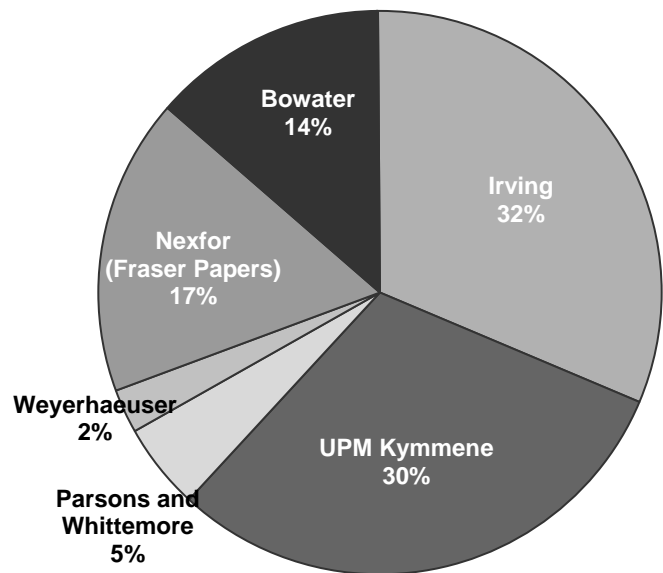
Crown Land Licenses

New Brunswick's Provincial Crown lands are divided into 10 licenses, which are managed by 6 multinational forestry corporations. With sales over 1 billion dollars per year, forestry forms the backbone of the New Brunswick economy. That being said, woods workers, pulp mill operators, forest planners are becoming a thing of the past as technology and mechanization as forest corporations trim the expenses, improving the profit margin for their shareholders.

A public agenda has yet to be developed for the future of Crown Lands.

What do you want to see happen? What are our ecological and social objectives for Crown lands? How can Crown lands be managed to maintain healthy forest ecosystems that sustain all plants and animals, soils, and waters? How can Crown lands be managed to honour aboriginal and treaty rights? How can Crown lands be managed to build stronger rural communities, provide secure livelihoods, and more equitably share the wealth they generate?

The Six Crown Licensees of New Brunswick



Source: 2000-2001 Government of New Brunswick Annual Report; Conservation Council of New Brunswick

Suggested Class Activities / Discussion Questions

1. Visit a local forestry operation and learn first hand what sustainable forestry looks like on the ground.
2. If there is a forested area near your school ground. Try to find out who owns it and if they would be willing to make a partnership with the school for building nature trails as an outdoor classroom for students.
3. Follow the chain of custody for a wood product - from the forest to a finished product. Count how many people touch the product. What are the impacts of involving so many, or so few people in the process?
4. Contact local forestry officials and the government to ask what the economic, social and environmental benefits are of their current forestry practices.
5. The main forestry companies are advocating for more plantations. Find out what this means. What kind of trees would be planted? What would be done to the land before it is planted? Would they use chemical pesticides? What kind of pesticides and how much would be applied? Visit a plantation and write down your thoughts.
6. Make a news clipping bulletin board in your class on the Jaakko Poyry report and the future of New Brunswick Crown lands.

Some ideas for what you can do?

- Spend some time getting to know the forests around home. This is the best way to learn about the forests themselves.
- Using a tree and plant identification guide, make an inventory of the woods around your home. See if you can find historical references of the same area and see if there have been any changes.
- Define what “sustainable forestry” is and then see how this compares with what local woodlots owners, industry, etc. are doing.
- Lobby local retailers to stock “green” (sustainably harvested) wood products.
- Implement a recycling program at your school, church, home, or place of work, thereby reducing the pressures on the region’s forests.



Where to find More Information

Falls Brook Centre (www.fallsbrookcentre.ca) has a large forestry section on the website that looks at forest certification, implications for small woodlot owners and operators, and on-going forestry activities in the Maritime Provinces

The **Conservation Council of New Brunswick** (www.web.net/~ccnb) The CCNB has up to date information on forestry issues in New Brunswick. If you're looking for more details on the Jaakko Poyry report, this is a good place to start.

The **Canadian Council of Forest Ministers** (www.ccfm.org) CCFM stimulates the development of policies and initiatives for strengthening the forest sector, including forest resources and their uses. It provides leadership, addresses national and international issues and sets the overall direction for stewardship and sustainable management of Canada's forests. CCFM consists of ministers from each provincial forestry/resource department and the Minister of Natural Resources - Canada.

Working with other organizations, the **International Network of Forests and Communities** (www.forestsandcommunities.org) seeks to develop a civil-society-led strategy to embed ecosystem and community-based forestry as the paradigmatic foundation for a global forest movement. Connecting, learning and relating with other people and perspectives, the INFC is committed to advancing community forestry that is ecologically and sustainably just.

The **WWF – Forests for Life Programme** (www.panda.org/forests4life/index.cfm) is leading the way in developing cutting-edge conservation tools and has campaigned vigorously on forest issues since its launch in 1996. With over 150 forest officers worldwide and more than 300 on-the-ground projects backed up by scientific analysis, and by advocacy work at the policy level, WWF spends in excess of US\$ 40 million every year seeking solutions to the problems and threats facing the world's forests. WWF works to protect forests, promotes their management to the highest possible standards, and is aiming to restore once-forested land to a more authentic state.

