

The forests of the mountainous region of the British Columbia interior and western Alberta are also coniferous, and very mixed in species and character. Their composition changes with local climate, which varies from dry to very humid. Production in this area has expanded very rapidly in recent years. Although the wood was used almost exclusively for lumber until a few years ago, there are now several pulp mills in the region.

Canada's only area of true deciduous forest is a relatively small one in the southernmost part of Ontario, a predominantly agricultural zone.

Wood Production

Canada's total area of productive forest is 554 million acres, roughly 10 per cent of the world total and second only to that of the U.S.S.R. Four-fifths of this forest is coniferous, the remainder deciduous.

The pattern of use for the harvest of this forest varies widely across the country. In Eastern Canada, about two-thirds of the wood is used for the production of pulp and paper, while lumber is the dominant product on the West Coast.

More than 4,000 million cubic feet of wood was cut from Canada's forests in 1970 -- about 90 per cent of it coniferous. A recent estimate placed the annual allowable cut from lands now accessible, and using present practices, at 8,480 million cubic feet, so that roughly half the allowable cut is being currently taken.

Economists predict, by the year 2,000, an annual harvest of 7,620 million cubic feet -- still within the present allowable cut. In addition, much of the timber in Canada's northern forests -- about 25 per cent of all the country's forested land -- has not yet been inventoried, so that no allowable cut has been calculated for this area.

Forest Industries

In 1970, Canadian forest industries employed almost 300,000 workers earning some \$1,940 million. Of these, about 52,000 worked in logging operations, 88,000 in wood industries and the remainder in paper and allied industries.

The largest lumber-mills are located on the West Coast, some employing as many as 600 or 700 people, while a typical large mill in Eastern Canada employs between 75 and 100. There has been a steady reduction in the number of sawmills in Canada in recent years, with many small mills going out of production.