

## SUSTAINING CANADA'S FORESTS

Forests cover half the landscape of Canada and figure prominently in the country's economy, history and national identity.

Because most of the country's forestland is publicly owned, government decisions on land use and forest practices are critical for preserving the environment and maintaining the economy.

Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments have all committed themselves to protecting 12 per cent of the country's representative natural areas in parks and reserves, a goal recommended in the UN Brundtland Commission report of 1987.

The focus at both the federal and provincial levels in Canada has shifted from timber production to sustainable forest management: maintaining the long-term health of forest ecosystems while providing economic and cultural opportunities for current and future generations. The change in focus reflects a recognition on the part of the public that while forests represent a valuable source of timber, they also have a variety of other uses, such as contributing to environmental quality, providing wildlife habitat and attracting tourism.

A parliamentary committee released a report in June recommending that Canada establish a national certification program that would audit forest operations and label forest products produced by environmentally sound methods.

A number of provinces, including

the three largest forest producers, British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario, have overhauled their forest practices, reducing annual allowable logging limits, eliminating large-scale clearcuts, improving reforestation and reducing the use of pesticides.

Quebec has developed a forest strategy aimed at enhancing the natural regeneration of trees and ensuring the protection of all other forest resources, including wildlife, soil and streams. The natural resources ministry has substantially reduced the maximum area that can be logged in a single harvest, with reductions ranging from an average of 40 per cent in northern Quebec to 80 per cent in southern Quebec.

Ontario is revamping its stumpage system to ensure a higher and more stable level of funding for regeneration of all harvested trees. Stumpage fees paid by industry for the right to harvest timber on provincial land will include a contribution to a new Forest Renewal Trust Fund and a surcharge levied when market prices exceed the forest industry's production costs plus "a reasonable return on investment." The portion of the fee paid into the trust fund will be refunded once the company has reforested the land it has harvested to the province's satisfaction.

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia, Canada's largest producer of forest products, is implementing a new comprehensive land use and resource management strategy.

To meet the Brundtland Commission's 12-per-cent goal, the B.C. government plans to double the amount of

### FACTS ABOUT CANADA'S FORESTS

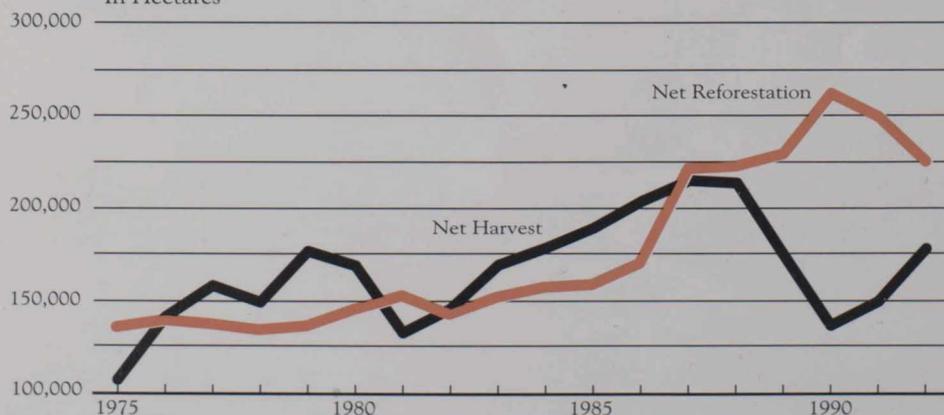
- Canada's forests cover more than a billion acres.
- More than half of Canada's forestland remains in its original natural state.
- Almost all of Canada's forestland is publicly owned, 71 per cent by the provinces and 23 per cent by the federal government, mostly in the territories.
- Canada's forests support almost 350 communities and provide jobs for one out of every 17,000 Canadians.
- Only about 27 per cent of the forest land base, or 277 million acres, is managed for timber production.

provincial land set aside for preservation by the year 2000. An independent Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE) is developing a land-use strategy for the entire province.

In response to CORE's first plan submitted in February for Vancouver Island, Premier Mike Harcourt announced in June that 13 per cent of the island land base, including rainforests across the island, would be permanently protected from development in 23 new parks. A new law, the Forest Land Reserve Act, will ensure sustainable management of the 81 per cent of the island designated as the Forest Land Base and available for commercial forestry and other resource use. Only limited logging will be allowed on 8 per cent of this land base to protect special ecological features such as salmon streams and hiking trails.

To offset the loss of logging jobs associated with the Vancouver Island land use plan, the government will create jobs and provide retraining in silviculture and environmental cleanup under its Forest Renewal Plan, announced in April. This plan will invest an estimated \$2 billion over five years directly into the forest sector throughout the province. Financed by increased stumpage fees paid by industry, the renewal plan focuses on improving silviculture and reforestation, rehabilitating areas damaged by past harvesting, increasing forestry jobs and encouraging Aboriginal participation in the forest sector through retraining and joint ventures.

**Harvesting and Reforestation in British Columbia**  
In Hectares



Since 1987, B.C. has planted more trees every year than it has harvested.