

# FORESTS OF CANADA: THE FEDERAL ROLE

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE MISSION: SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

*It can be truly said that Canada is a forest nation!*

To an extent not always well appreciated by Canadians, the forests of Canada are both the pillars of our prosperity and the essence of our environment. No other of our natural resources combine in such measure both the credits and the conflicts of *environmental and economic values*, as are to be found in our forests.

Therefore, the federal role in the future of Canada's forests must surely begin with a commitment to help *sustain* these environmental and economic values *in balance*, indefinitely into the long-term future.

That is what the compelling phrase *sustainable development* is all about: the resolution and reconciliation of our frequently differing economic and environmental values. That is why it has become the theme for mankind's very survival in our environment on earth. If this concept of sustainable development is ever going to be practised successfully in Canada, *it must begin with our forests!*

For those reasons, and because the new *Department of Forestry Act* (S.C. 1989, c. 27) is the first legislation in Canada ever to contain the words "sustainable development" in its terms of reference, our Sub-committee on Forestry has decided to address that principle as the foundation for the future *mission* of the Department of Forestry (Forestry Canada) as it begins its second life in 1990.