

have too little information, wrong information, or different goals and values? What could be done to find some common basis for dialogue?

The future of the forest on the Great Northern Peninsula, and in Newfoundland in general, is of immense importance to residents. It provides fuel, shelter, and food, raw material for the pulp and lumber industry, the setting for a growing tourist economy, and biodiversity to maintain the ecosystem's flexibility. So the question of whether or not clearcutting and levels of timber removal will deplete or destroy the northern Newfoundland forest struck us as pivotal to the future of rural Newfoundland and worthy of an answer.

To find that answer, we adopted a three-step method. First, we analysed the residents' and foresters' viewpoints for their claims, their evidence, and their stated and implied values. Second, we investigated the forest's condition ourselves by site survey and documentary evidence. We also examined what residents and loggers were actually doing in the woods by field observation and household surveys. Third, we placed the competing visions in wider historical and cultural context to identify why there was a difference and to seek ways of improving the dialogue.

Anthropologists have recently begun to consider questions of environmental sustainability an important research topic (Bennett 1993). The discipline is now better equipped theoretically and methodologically to tackle such contemporary ecological concerns. No longer observers of isolated villages, we can trace the links between local, regional, national, and international events. Our long-time interest in ecological-evolutionary change has generated a political ecology, which links development and the environment—sometimes, to forest sustainability in particular (e.g. Stonich 1993, Marchak 1990). Finally, anthropologists have become more interdisciplinary, either by borrowing from other disciplines or by collaborating with their practitioners—as we have done in this report.

The senior author is conducting a long term study of cultural and ecological changes in the small communities on the Great Northern Peninsula.¹ He contributes his familiarity with the sociocultural changes underway there and his ability to "read" or contextualize what people say. The junior author has been a unit forester on the Great Northern Peninsula and now is the Executive Director of the Centre for Forest and Environmental Studies, in western Newfoundland. He contributes the ability to "read" the forest and the foresters, to evaluate technical forest data, and to place forest management issues on the peninsula in provincial, national, and international context.

The remainder of this report will introduce the region and the forest's role in the economy and report on the three steps of our method to analyse the residents' complaints.

¹The senior author thanks Susan Omohundro for assistance in all phases of the field research and writing of this paper. This report is gratefully dedicated to the foresters and residents of the Great Northern Peninsula; may the forest be with you always.