

## **Sustainable forests use by the First Nations and First Nation Forestry Program (FNFP) in Canada**

### Regional overview

Canada has the very large forest, and these precious natural resources played a very important role in development of Canada. Canada's forests are owned primarily by the people of Canada. Canada has 417.6 million ha of forest and 94% of Canada's forest is owned by provincial (71%), territorial and federal governments (23%), and 6% are forest under private ownership.

Boreal forest occupies 77% of Canada's forest (417.6 million ha). By far the most dominant tree species are conifers, and there are a very few species found in four main genera - the spruce (*Picea*), and aspen (*Populus*).

### Forests use by aboriginal peoples

The forest is an important source of livelihood, culture and spirituality for Aboriginal people and has played an important role in their cultural and social lives. It also provides a valuable source of income for many communities since 80% to 85% of Aboriginal communities in Canada are within the forest regions of Canada. The relative isolation of many First Nation communities often con-strains economic opportunities . However, since they are in areas of abundant forest, there is great potential for forest-related economic development.

Aboriginal-controlled forests are often too small to provide self-sufficiency to Aboriginal communities through forest development. However, Natural Resources Canada states that these lands provide Aboriginal communities with a starting point for building or enhancing technical and professional capacity, developing business partnerships, and supporting the maintenance of spiritual, recreational, and cultural connections with the land

### First Nation Forestry Program (FNFP)

Aboriginal forestry is bringing socio-economic benefits for Aboriginal people and communities. One of the ways that this is achieved is through the First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) where “communities have been able to create new partnerships, develop joint ventures, carry out relevant studies, develop and implement

forest management plans, enhance capacity and skills development through forest management activities, learn leading edge technologies, and obtain valuable relevant forestry training”

The First Nation Forestry Program (FNFP) is funded jointly by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Natural Resources Canada. Its goal is to promote the active participation of First Nations in forestry.

Canada recognizes that issues surrounding First Nations access and tenure of its forests will be one of the primary factors affecting the growth and stability of the forest sector in the future. Improving partnerships around the forest will greatly benefit both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. Having the people with the knowledge and understanding to foster good relationships and work together with First Nations communities will ultimately lead to greater economic self-sufficiency for First Nations communities and increased stability for the overall forest sector.

#### Reference

Summary of sustainable forest management in Canada

(<http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/japan-japon/assets/pdfs/building-forestry-2-for-estrie-const-uction-jpn.pdf>)