

Résumé of a brief to the Coulombe Commission, May 4-5, 2004, Gatineau, Qc.
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The management of Québec forests is to a large degree the management of the environment of the whole province, as forests cover about 60% of the entire territory.

I question the adequacy of policies of the MRNFP regarding their incorporation of ecological principles on several points :

--The future effect of “Zoning” of public land by setting bounded areas of 1-intensive management (plantations), 2-extensive (recreational activities combined with forest harvesting up to calculated AAC) and, and 3-conservation management “zones” across the entire enormous public forest of Québec.

--Homogenisation of forests resulting from mechanised, “blanket” application of treatments at stand levels and management unit levels.

--Lack of consideration of the potential effects of anthropogenic climate change.

--Lack of integration between private forest versus public forest management policies, oversight and support, which has led to overharvesting in l’Outaouais.

--No good evidence of a genuine policy on endangered species (e.g. including deer but not wolverine population levels) in biodiversity Criteria and Indicators planning.

--Use across the province of a forest harvest model, Sylva II, which may be unreliable in its basic assumptions.

--Paying forest companies as well as increasing their allowable cut, for thinning work which has not been demonstrated to increase stand production, and which may harm biological diversity.

--“One size fits all” (loi universel) forestry regulations across Québec, felt by most professional foresters to be unwise to apply in all situations and management units..

--Insufficient interaction and contact of Quebec ecological researchers, forest planners, and forest engineers with research across North America; defining “ecological regions” has been substituting for the study of ecological processes and population ecology needed in conservation planning.

--A lack of training, advancement, and respect for forest workers who actually perform a lot of forest management during their work in field operations.

I believe that recommendations re applying ecological principles, with help from forest workers, can be collapsed into one paragraph!.

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