



Sustainable Forest Management in Canada

Key Facts

Canada's sustainable forest management practices are internationally recognized as among the most rigorous in the world.

- Canada is a forest nation. Our **348 million hectares of forest lands** represent about **9%** of the world's forest but Canada accounts for only about **0.3%** of global deforestation.
- Canada has **166 million hectares of forest land that is independently certified as sustainably managed**. That's **40%** of the world's certified forests — far more than any other country in the world.
- The United States has the second largest area of independently certified forest land with 47 million hectares or 10% of the world's certified forests.
- Certification demonstrates **sustainable forest management** by providing independent third-party assurance that management practices meet a strict set of biological, environmental and social criteria.

Canada is a world leader in forest science.

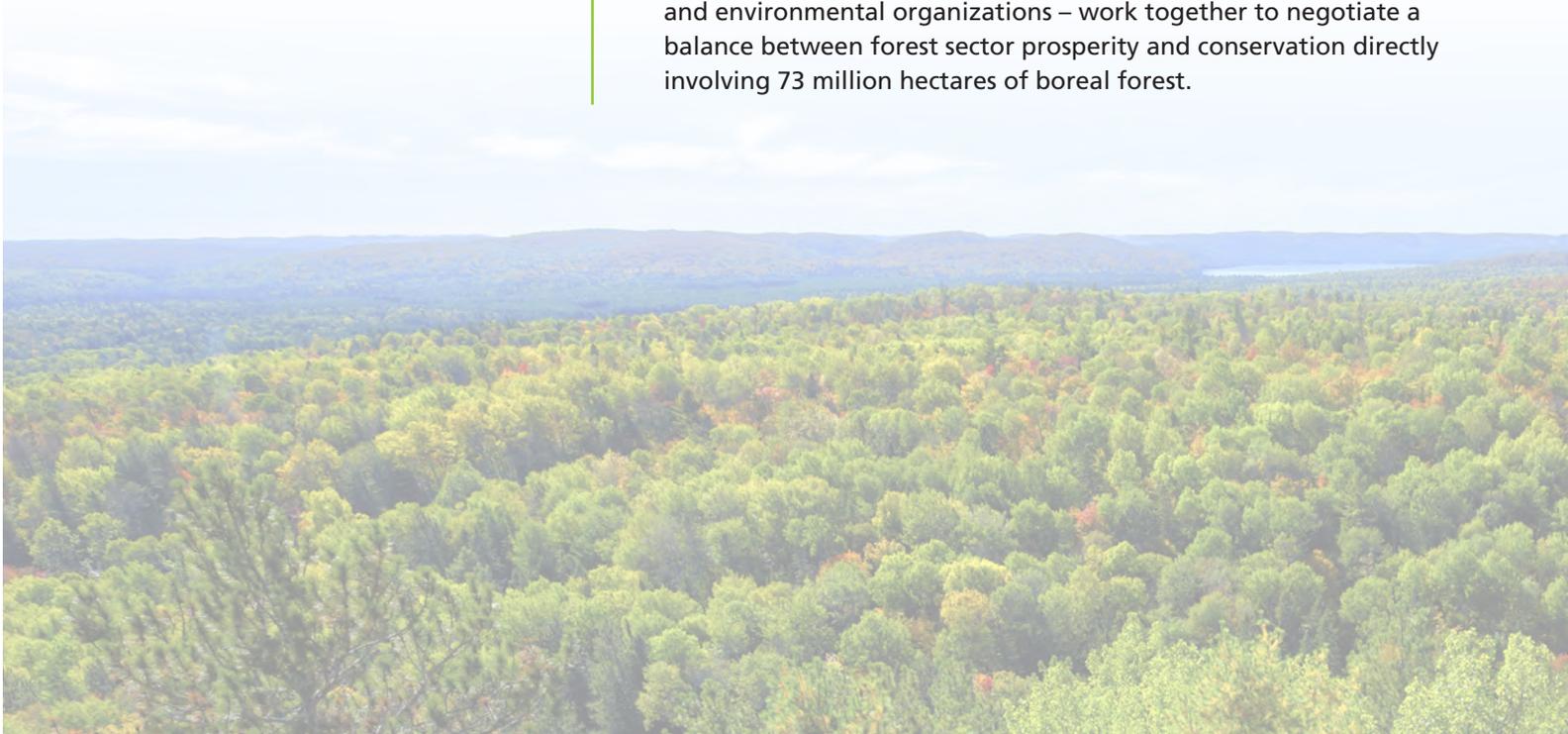
- Canadian forest practices are based on **sound science that considers the long-term sustainability of forest ecosystems.**
- Canadian scientists are building a permanent knowledge base required for Canada to remain a world leader in sustainable forest practices.

Canada's rate of deforestation has been very low for more than two decades.

- Deforestation is the permanent clearing of forests to make way for new, non-forest land uses. Over the past two decades, Canada's annual deforestation rate has decreased, averaging less than 0.02% of the total forest area.
- Harvesting is not deforestation. In Canada, all forests harvested on public lands must be regenerated as part of sustainable forest management. In the last decade, the annual harvest has affected an average of less than 0.3% of the total forest area. In contrast, over the past 10 years, on average 4% of Canada's forests were damaged by insects and 0.7% were burned in forest fires each year.

Canada's boreal forest has long been central to our natural environment, history, culture and economy.

- **Canada uses many conservation measures to protect its boreal forests**, including integrated land-use planning, environmentally sound forest management, and species and habitat recovery. **Only 0.2% of Canada's boreal forests are harvested each year.**
- The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA) – the world's largest conservation initiative – was established in 2010 and sets a global precedent for cooperation. CBFA partners – forest companies and environmental organizations – work together to negotiate a balance between forest sector prosperity and conservation directly involving 73 million hectares of boreal forest.



Canada is transparent and accountable regarding its sustainability practices.

- The Government of Canada reports annually to Parliament through *The State of Canada's Forests*. For 25 years, this legislated report has demonstrated that the Government of Canada values the economic, social and environmental status of forests and forestry in Canada.
- Canada is constantly monitoring its **sustainable forest management practices** based on many science-based sustainability indicators. These indicators include regeneration, forest disturbances, carbon emissions, and area and volume harvested. They give government, industry, researchers and the public a way to consistently define, assess and monitor our progress on sustainable forest management, and inform improvements to forest management practices over time.

Canada's leadership in forest management extends far beyond its borders.

- In 1994, Canada was a **founding member of the Montréal Process**, an initiative dedicated to the sustainable development of the world's temperate and boreal forests.
- Canada led the way in developing the International Model Forest Network – a global network of 60 model forests in 31 countries on five continents. This initiative has increased knowledge of natural resource management and demonstrated the on-the-ground application of the principles of sustainable development.

Canada is committed to working with Indigenous communities and upholding Aboriginal rights.

- Canada's constitution requires the strong protection of Aboriginal rights. Canada actively engages with Indigenous peoples in resource development decisions affecting their land and communities.
- Canada upholds our constitutional responsibility to work closely with Aboriginal communities to develop the forest sector responsibly and support economic development.
- The forest sector is one of the top employers of Aboriginal people in Canada.



Canada's Forest Practices – What Others Are Saying

Leger Research Intelligence Group – Analysis of Market Acceptance Issues (2014)

“As a supplier of forest products, Canada is perceived as the best forest products supplier in terms of environmental practices and reputation.”

Conference Board of Canada – How does Canada's intensity of use of forest resources compare with that of other countries? (2013)

“Canada has received an 'A' grade for its intensity of use of forest resources. This ranking means that the amount of trees Canada harvests is well below our large volume of forested land. In fact, more than 70% of Canada's forested area has never been harvested.”

“Canada has the world's largest area of forest certified to third-party sustainable forest certification. The area of forests certified in Canada has steadily increased in recent years.”

Dr. Ben Cashore, Yale University – How Canada Compares (2004)

“The regime of forest management and conservation in Canada is, in the aggregate, one of the most advanced in the world.”

“In a comparison of forest policy and regulations across 38 jurisdictions around the world, when it comes to a range of measures including streamside management and reforestation policy, Canada is undeniably among the world's most environmentally progressive producers”.