

Biodiversity,
Our Priority

Forests

Newsletter from Québec

**Adoption by the National Assembly of Bill 136,
an act to amend the forest act and other legislative provisions**

Last November, the *Newsletter from Québec* mentioned the work being done to review Québec's forest system. Several important steps in the process have been completed in the last few months, and, on May 22, the National Assembly adopted Bill 136, *An Act to amend the Forest Act and other legislative provisions*.



Jacques Brassard,
Québec's Minister of Natural
Resources National Assembly

"Today marks a major step forward in the multiple use of our forests and in the methods we use to harmonize the management of the various forest resources. In adopting Bill 136, we have updated a forest system that was already one of the most

progressive in the world. The bill makes substantial changes to certain aspects of our forestry policy that we were committed to improving, such as public participation, harmonization of different forest uses and forest protection," said Jacques Brassard, Québec's Minister of Natural Resources.

In addition to preserving the gains made by the 1986 *Forest Act*, that is based on the principles of sustainable forest management and sustained yields, the new provisions introduced as part of the updating process include joint responsibility for holders of timber supply and forest management agreement (TSFMA) covering the same management unit, based on a joint evaluation of their forestry and environmental performance. The Bill also provides for the implementation of an increased yield policy and numerous other measures.

Thanks to the new version of the *Forest Act*, future generations of Quebecers will inherit healthy, productive forests that will continue to play a key role in the socio-economic development of regional communities.

The process of updating the forest system began in 1996, with a review of forest management since the implementation of the *Forest Act*, in 1986. To better understand the nature and scope of the needs, the ministère des Ressources naturelles carried out extensive public consultations throughout Québec. More than 500 briefs containing hundreds of recommendations were submitted by Quebecers from a wide range of backgrounds and all spheres of the forestry community both at public hearings and parliamentary standing committee sittings.

All documents relating to the forest system review and Bill 136, published since 1996, are available on the Internet at the following address:

www.mrn.gouv.qc.ca/3/30/300/maj_regime/intro.asp



ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE



***PROTECTING THE GASPÉ
PENINSULA CARIBOU:
A SPECIAL FOREST
MANAGEMENT PLAN***

The ministère des Ressources naturelles and the Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec have jointly prepared a special forest management plan to protect the Gaspé peninsula caribou herd. The implementation of the plan is one of the measures adopted to preserve the habitats needed by the herd for its survival.

The Gaspé peninsula caribou herd is considered to be in danger because of its small size, its vulnerability to predators and its limited habitat. The animals tend to stay on the high peaks of the Gaspé Park, but in the last few years, many of them have begun to venture outside the park, into sectors considered to be forest lands. Timber supply and forest management agreements are currently in force in these sectors, which total approximately 30,000 hectares. Measures are therefore required because forest activities are likely to affect the caribou habitat, among other things by reducing the production of arboreal lichen.

The forest management plan is thus designed to protect the caribou without compromising forest operations. The planners hope to achieve this dual objective by dividing the area around the park into three separate management zones. The first, covering an area of approximately 10,000 hectares, is designated as a conservation zone, and the caribou habitat will be preserved and even improved within its boundaries. Logging will be prohibited in stands growing at altitude and alongside enclaves of alpine tundra. The migration corridors linking the park to remote alpine tundra enclaves will also be protected.

In the second zone, designated as a management zone, certain types of forest work will be permitted, but forest companies will have to consider the altitude factor and reduce disturbance levels progressively as they approach the summits. When work will be carried out, maximum protection will have to be given to advance-growth and lichen-bearing snags. In addition, all management sectors of more than 18,000 hectares within this zone will be restored to production in the near future.

The third zone, covering an area of approximately 1,000 hectares, appears to be of interest to the caribou, but research is currently underway to see if the animal actually use it. This area will therefore continue to be a conservation zone for the time being, although the migration corridor linking it to the Gaspé Park will be considered when calculating the allowable annual cut. No forest management work is planned in this sector for the next five years, and the standards applicable will not be established until 2004. This leaves plenty of time to study the herd's habits in the sector, so that appropriate measures can be introduced.



MFRN

The ministère des Ressources naturelles is currently carrying out several research projects, in collaboration with other organizations, to obtain more information about the Gaspé peninsula caribou herd. Radio collars were installed on 25 caribou in December 1998, and the animals have been tracked every two weeks since then. The project will enable the Department to determine how the herd uses the area adjacent to the Gaspé Park.



WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS 2003

Appointment of the Secretary-General

Mr. Jean-Louis K rouac has been appointed Secretary-General of the 12th World Forestry Congress to be held in Qu bec City from September 21 to 28, 2003. Mr. K rouac's appointment was announced by Canada's Minister of Natural Resources, Ralph Goodale, and Qu bec's Minister of Natural Resources, Jacques Brassard.



Jean-Louis K rouac

Mr. K rouac has a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in forestry sciences, as well as extensive experience in the field of forestry, especially at the international level. Until very recently he was president of the largest forestry consulting firm in Canada, and has been involved in several forestry projects in Africa, Asia and South America.

The World Forestry Congress is held once every six years, under the aegis of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Nearly 5,000 participants from all five continents are expected to gather in Qu bec City for the event. Representatives of governments, the scientific community, industry and non-governmental organizations will analyze and debate a range of forest-related themes during the seven-day meeting, which will be the first major international gathering of forestry stakeholders in the third millennium.



CUJ

Canada was selected to host the 2003 World Forestry Conference at the FAO meeting in Rome, on June 17, 1999. The last Congress was held in Antalya, Turkey, in October 1997.

The 2003 World Forestry Congress Web site can be found at:



CUJ



GEOMATICS AT THE SERVICE OF ECO-FOREST SURVEYS

The ministère des Ressources naturelles is extending its use of geomatics to manage forest survey data and enhance the use of survey by-products. Indeed, the Department's specialists have recently completed the development and implementation of the Eco-forest Information System, known by its French acronym SIEF.

The SIEF is a centralized spatial reference information system that integrates, manages and circulates a huge quantity of forest, ecological and territorial data (maps, surveys and compilations).



Among other things, it can be used to standardize geometric and descriptive data, simplify data exchanges, ensure data preservation and increase eco-forest data processing capacity.

The system helps improve forest management by providing foresters with high quality, standardized spatially referenced data. Further information about the SIEF can be found on the Department's Web site, at

www.mrn.gouv.qc.ca



NEWSLETTER FROM QUÉBEC — FORESTS is published quarterly in English, French, German and Spanish, by the Québec government.

TEXTS

Ministère des Ressources naturelles
5700, 4^e Avenue Ouest
Charlesbourg (Québec)
G1H 6R1
Canada
Telephone: (418) 627-8609
Fax: (418) 643-0720
E-mail: service.citoyens@mrn.gouv.qc.ca

Internet: <http://www.mrn.gouv.qc.ca>

Coordinator: Nathalie Côté

Legal deposit
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec
ISSN 1499-0393
2001-3014

