

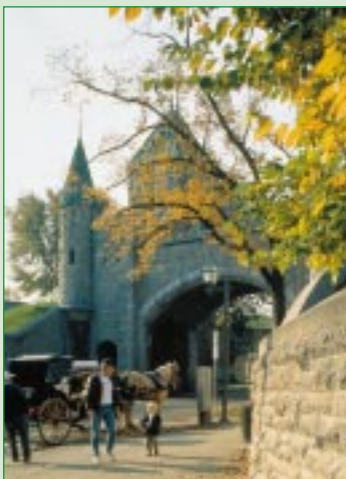
*Biodiversity,
Our Priority*

Forests

Newsletter from Québec

*Québec city will host the world
Forestry Congress in 2003*

The last World Forestry Congress took place in Antalya, Turkey, in 1997. The next one will be held in the year 2003, in Québec City, Canada. Members of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) board met in Rome last June and accepted the candidacy of Québec's capital city, allowing Congress activities to begin. Interestingly, it was also in Québec City, now a UNESCO world heritage site, that the FAO was founded in 1945.



COMMUNAUTÉ URBAINE DE QUÉBEC

The Québec City ramparts and gateways, including the Saint-Louis Gate shown here, bear witness to the city's military history.

MORE THAN 5,000 PARTICIPANTS FROM 175 COUNTRIES ARE EXPECTED

The World Forestry Congress is held every six years, and is one of the most important forums for the discussion of global forestry issues. It therefore constitutes a first-class international platform, an excellent point of exchange and a showcase of knowledge for everyone interested directly or indirectly in the subject of forestry. Basically, the goal of the Congress is to improve forestry practices. The recommendations it generates have a global as well as a regional impact. Its participants come from all spheres, including government, scientific, industrial and financial circles, as well as non-governmental organizations, research bodies and so on.



The 5,000 participants at the 12th World Forestry Congress in 2003, representing approximately 175 countries, will be reviewing the situation of forests throughout the world. Among other things, they will be able to look more closely at major forestry trends, adapt forest policies to the needs of the third millennium, provide information for authorities making decisions in forest-related fields, and raise public awareness of today's main forest-related issues.

THE 12th CONGRESS ON THE INTERNET

The 12th World Forestry Congress will be held in the fall of 2003 at Québec City's ultra-modern Convention Centre. The Congress will be organized jointly by the Canadian Forestry Service, Natural Resources Canada and Québec's ministère des Ressources naturelles.

The organizers' main task, in addition to attracting as many participants as possible, is to publicize the Congress throughout the world and disseminate as much information as possible on the organization process. A WEB site has already been created, and its content will change over the months. It can be consulted at the following addresses:

www.cfm2003.org and www.wfc2003.org



CANADA – HOME TO 10% OF THE WORLD'S FORESTS

Canada is home to 10% of the world's forests, and hosts an impressive range of land-based and marine ecosystems. Many of Canada's forests grow naturally. They cover a total area of 4,180,000 km² (757,900 km² in Québec). The 12th World Forestry Congress will therefore provide an excellent opportunity for all the Canadian provinces, and for Québec in particular, to discuss the characteristics of their respective forest management processes with other participants.



MRN

Québec alone has a total surface area of nearly 1.7 million km², and its many thousands of lakes and rivers make it the world's richest region in terms of per capita freshwater resources. Its forests, 91% of which are State owned, are omnipresent. They fulfil a variety of functions at the environmental, social and economic levels.

Québec's forests are home to a wide variety of highly complex ecosystems. They are also extremely diversified, providing shelter for more than 60 mammal species, nearly 200 bird species, approximately 30 reptile and amphibian species, and thousands of insect species. Nearly 80 species of fish live in its lakes and rivers, enriching a forest made up of more than 930 vascular plant species, including 60 tree species and a multitude of mushrooms, algae, mosses and bryophytes.

QUÉBEC'S FORESTS – A LEISURE CENTRE PAR EXCELLENCE

All these features combine to make Québec's forests into a vast leisure and recreational centre where more than a million holidaymakers, tourists, sports enthusiasts, nature lovers and people seeking outstanding vacation sites come every year in search of enjoyment. Many of them rent camps on public lands, captivated by the charms of wild woodlands and isolated lakes. Every year, these activities generate total economic spin-offs estimated at approximately \$2.5 billion.

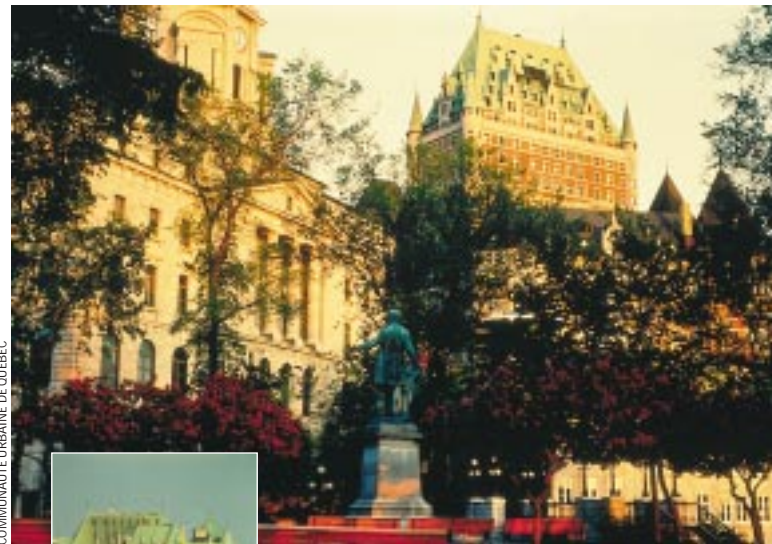
Québec's forests also constitute vast reservoirs of timber and play another, even more vital economic role, supplying an industry with total shipments valued at nearly \$12 billion per year, and exports worth nearly \$7 billion. Indeed, the forest sector provides direct jobs for nearly 72,000 Québécois and indirect jobs for tens of thousands of others, especially in the secondary processing mills. Overall, the economies of more than 250 of Québec's municipalities depend on the forests.



MRN

QUÉBEC CITY, ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CITIES IN THE WORLD

The experts agree that Québec City, which will host the Congress, is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Visitors to this, the national capital of Québec and cradle of the French-speaking culture in North America, sometimes feel they are stepping back in time to a medieval era whose marks the city still bears even today.



COMMUNAUTÉ URBAINE DE QUÉBEC



The Latin Quarter, one of the most picturesque areas of Québec City. In the background is the famous Château Frontenac. It was here that the FAO was founded in 1945.

Québec's national capital is not only a cultural and tourist centre, it is also the site of many different leisure activities.



Even at night, the Old City maintains a magical quality.

With its ramparts, citadel and cannons facing out to the St. Lawrence River, the city has maintained some of the features characteristic of its warrior days. Its Latin Quarter provides a romantic setting and exudes a historical charm reminiscent of certain European cities. Québec City is the only remaining fortified city in North America, and overlooks the great St. Lawrence River, one of the world's largest navigable waterways. It welcomes more than four million visitors every year.

ANCIENT AND MODERN

Despite its ancient character, Québec City is still a thoroughly modern place. Its 11,000 hotel rooms offer all the comfort one might expect of a major North American tourist centre.

With a population of 600,000, it is considered to be medium-sized, boasting all the benefits of a large city with none of the disadvantages. In fact, it has a reputation as one of the cleanest and safest cities in North America, and visitors can enjoy a sparkling cultural life as well as an exceptional range of sporting, leisure and gastronomic activities. Its medical services are also first-class.

Located just one hour's drive from the American border and two and a half hours from Montreal, the Québec City region is home to 170 research centres, 127 of which are linked directly or indirectly to Laval University, the oldest French-speaking university in North America, founded in 1663.



COMMUNAUTÉ URBAINE DE QUÉBEC

Québec City overlooks the St. Lawrence River, one of the largest navigable waterways in the world.

A MAJOR FORESTRY CENTRE

In Canada, the Québec City region is considered to be a major forestry centre. The administrative offices of the ministère des Ressources naturelles, which manages Québec's extensive public forests, are located here, as are Laval University's Faculty of Forestry and Geomatics, the Canadian Forestry Service's Laurentian Forestry Centre, and a variety of technical educational centres. The region is also home to the forest sector's main professional associations and corporations, and to its major decision-making and advisory bodies.

Québec City's Convention Centre is located in the heart of the tourist district. Underground walkways link it to the city's main hotel complexes. Built only recently, the Convention Centre boasts the latest equipment and technology. It is here, in this ultra-modern building, that the communications nerve centre for the 12th World Forestry Congress will be installed, deploying various means of communication to publicize Congress activities throughout the world.



CENTRE DES CONGRES DE QUÉBEC

The Convention Centre, a modern building with leading-edge technology.

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TEXTS

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