

*Biodiversity,
Our Priority*

Forests

Newsletter from Québec

MAURICIE – CANADA'S FORESTRY CAPITAL

The Mauricie area, one of Québec's most beautiful forestry regions, is currently preparing for its role as *Canada's Forestry Capital*, a title it will hold throughout the year 2001. The title is conferred every year on an outstanding forestry region that has been able, over the years, to excel in every aspect of forestry, and in which forestry is an important tool for everyday socio-economic development.



APFSM

The Saint-Maurice River flows over a distance of more than 560 kilometres in Mauricie, and has a dozen tributaries.

In addition to a host of activities throughout the year 2001, *Canada's Forestry Capital* will be offering guided tours of the forests, beginning this summer, to provide visitors with an overview of Québec's expertise in integrated forest resource management (IRM). Further information on the Canada's Forestry Capital program and the guided tours can be obtained by calling (819) 536-1001 or by writing to afvsm@hotmail.com

Towards a renewed forest system

A bill has recently been tabled in the National Assembly allowing Québec to renew its forest system. Although the current system, which has been in existence for only 13 years, is still relatively young and is considered to be one of the most advanced in Canada, the government nevertheless decided to proceed with the renewal in response to the issues raised by sustainable forest management.

While the forest system review translates the aspirations and needs of Québec society in connection with a forestry sector in constant evolution, it also reflects the highly democratic approach of Québec's institutions. Indeed, the work leading to the renewal of the system required more than three years of effort and involved every forestry sector player in Québec, including forest users, ecologists' associations, groups of citizens, educational institutions, First Nations representatives and so on. During the public hearings, nearly 500 briefs were submitted by a broad range of participants.

Later this summer, following the tabling of a bill to amend the *Forest Act*, the Québec government will be holding a parliamentary standing committee to consider the forest system review. This time, Québécois will have an opportunity to give their opinions on the legislative content of the new system, by presenting briefs and comments to the committee. The committee's work will serve to improve the bill, which should be adopted towards the end of the year 2000.

Québec's National Assembly, where the bill instituting the revised forest system was debated.



ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE

FORESTRY PRACTICES AND PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE

Since it first adopted the principles of sustainable forest management, Québec has been working towards documenting the impacts of logging operations on biological diversity and ecosystems.



This is a complex, long-term task, since the territory of Québec covers five major ecosystem zones, from North to South, containing several thousand animal and plant species and more than 25,000 varieties of insects. For forestry scientists and biologists in search of new knowledge, this presents an extraordinary challenge at the dawn of the new millennium.

Recently, François Potvin and Réhaume Courtois, two researchers from the Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec, were able to show, after five years of work, that an over-concentration of logging areas created by cutting with protection of regeneration and soils (CPRS) does not, in the short term, allow for the constitution of appropriate habitats for certain wildlife species, including the snowshoe hare. CPRS, an approach aimed at protecting natural advance growth, has been used extensively in Québec's forests since the *Forest Protection Strategy* was first launched in 1994.

Following this work, a number of initiatives have been introduced in various regions to improve the quality of wildlife habitats during logging operations. One way of doing this is to ensure that logging areas are distributed more evenly throughout the region.

The Québec government, for its part, has asked the forest companies to change their logging strategies in dual vocation (forestry and wildlife) areas, wildlife preserves and exclusive outfitting zones, replacing them with approaches more conducive to the creation of quality wildlife habitats.

On April 1, to promote the implementation of these new approaches, the Ministère des Ressources naturelles introduced a number of new financial incentives designed to encourage the use by forest companies of forestry practices with beneficial impacts on wildlife habitats, such as mosaic cutting with protection of regeneration and soils.

In the boreal forest, and especially in the North Shore and Abitibi regions, researchers are currently working with the forest industry to develop management strategies aimed not only at protecting advance growth, but also at maintaining stand structures. In these forests, which are disturbed periodically by fire, Québec's researchers are increasingly convinced that, to protect the biological diversity of ecosystems, it is necessary to maintain a broad range of structural elements such as timber residues, shrub stories, snags and residual trees, in addition to protecting advance growth. This approach has the added advantage of preserving landscape quality, with the resulting benefits for leisure and tourist activities.



The work of researchers Réhaume Courtois (left) and François Potvin has led to a number of initiatives throughout Québec to improve the quality of wildlife habitats.



REFORESTATION: QUÉBEC-CHINA COOPERATION

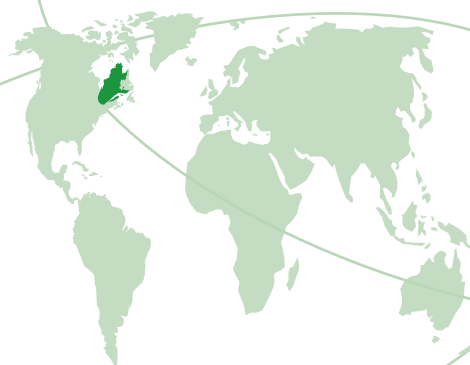
A Québec delegation of specialists in horticultural technologies and the production of forest seedlings recently went to Chongqing, in the south-central region of China, at the invitation of the Chinese Department of Science and Technology. The mission was part of a technical exchange process begun two years ago by the Chongqing Forestry Bureau and the Ministère des Ressources naturelles, aimed at replanting certain regions of the Chongqing province upstream of the Three Gorges hydroelectricity development. The Chinese authorities consider the prevention of erosion in the natural Yangtze basin to be a national priority.



China, which hopes to implement an ambitious 4.5 million plant reforestation project over a 20-year period in the western part of the country, sent an initial exploratory mission to Québec in 1998. Québec has been interested in reforestation for the last forty years, and has acquired an enviable expertise in this area, especially in the production of seeds and seedlings.



Following the Québec delegation's visit to China, the Chongqing Forestry Bureau and the Ministère des Ressources naturelles have agreed to do everything they can to facilitate a feasibility study with a view to creating a model nursery in China with an annual capacity of 10 million seedlings, and to transfer technical knowledge on the production of forestry and horticultural seedlings. The Chinese authorities have also expressed an interest in Québec's expertise with spatial reference systems and sensitive zone management.



As part of the current project, Québec will shortly be welcoming its first group of trainees from the Chongqing Forestry Research Institute.

THE FIRST OF ITS KIND: A WORLD DICTIONARY OF TREES

A professor at Laval University's Faculty of Forestry, **Miroslav M. Grandtner**, together with a team of one hundred collaborators from throughout the world, is currently in the process of preparing a world dictionary of trees, the first work of its kind. The completed dictionary will have five volumes and will contain information on the diversity, distribution, ecology and use of trees throughout the world.

Professor Grandtner's project is posted in English on his Web site,

www.wdt.qc.ca

For the time being, the site includes only North American trees whose Latin names begin with the letters A to L, but when the alphabetical list is complete to the letter Z and has been translated into French, the dictionary will be available both on the Internet and in book form, published by the Elsevier publishing company in Amsterdam. Further information can be obtained by calling **(418) 656-2838** or by e-mail at: **miroslav.grandtner@sbf.ulaval.ca**



A hundred researchers from throughout the world are working with Professor Miroslav M. Grandtner and Laval University to produce the first-ever world dictionary of trees.

FIRST GRADUATES IN INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Centre matapédien d'études collégiales (CMEC), located near Rimouski, has just trained its first set of graduates in integrated forest resource management, or IRM. This is an approach that has become increasingly popular in Québec ever since the province elected to apply the principles of sustainable forest management.

The group of fifteen CMEC college graduates received 900 hours of training on the protection of various forest components, namely wildlife, timber, water, landscapes and leisure activities.

To meet IRM needs, the training covers the range of forest ecosystems existing in Québec, their content, multiple resource management approaches, and some basic elements of environmental certification (which is very important to the forest companies). It also includes communication techniques, which are essential to facilitate public participation in forest management.

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