

VOLUNTARY PAPERS OF MAJOR INTEREST TO THE DELIBERATIONS (LEVEL 2)

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Monitoring the sustainable development of Canada's forests from space: the EOSD project

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In support of national and international reporting requirements, the Canadian Forest Service, in partnership with the Canadian Space Agency, is using space-based, earth observation technologies to support the monitoring of sustainable development of Canada's forests through an initiative called Earth Observation for Sustainable Development of Forests (EOSD). This project will assist in the implementation of Canada's international obligations in relation to climate change and sustainable forest management.

The current priority of EOSD is mapping circa-year 2000 land cover in the forested areas of Canada, in partnership with the provinces, territories, universities and industry. These maps are scheduled for completion in 2006. A longer-term goal of EOSD is to produce maps of forest change, biomass and land cover on a five- to ten-year cycle. An important component of EOSD is research directed at fulfilling these long-term goals. Research is focusing on developing, improving and automating procedures for land cover, change monitoring, and biomass measurements.

In addition to thematic maps, products generated in this programme will include data, methods and systems that will be freely available and distributed via the internet. These products will be an integral component of Canada's National Forest Information System, which is a new forest measuring and monitoring system that will help the public and interested organizations understand the composition, distribution and dynamics of Canada's forests.

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Canada's national forest inventory: monitoring the sustainability of Canada's forests

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Canada's current National Forest Inventory is a periodic compilation of existing inventory material from across the country. While this approach has many advantages, it lacks information about the nature and rate of changes to