

# Canadian Forest Service Science Policy Workshop: Summary of the day

September 26, 2017

Ottawa, Ontario, Westin Hotel

The Canadian Forest Service (CFS) hosted a science-policy workshop on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in Ottawa to officially launch its newly restructured Portfolio and begin the co-creation of 10-year national research agendas around the seven portfolio pillars, i.e. Cumulative Effects, Fibre Solutions, Forest Climate Change, Pest Risk Management, Strengthening Forest Sector Competitiveness, Sustainable Forest Management and Wildfire Risk Management. Over 70 participants from 32 organizations attended the workshop, and spent the day discussing the development of national forest research agendas for Canada.

The workshop was successful; participants validated preliminary research priorities, flagged some research gaps, and continued the conversation on ways to improve collaboration.

## Crosscutting issues and needs

- Collaboration across different industrial sectors and across CFS portfolio areas to solve complex issues facing the forest sector, such as mitigating climate change.
- CFS should convene forest stakeholders across the country (e.g. collaboration with universities, engaging with non-traditional partners, and with Indigenous People).
- Improved leveraging of strengths of all forest organizations is required to improve knowledge dissemination and transfer, and conduct necessary socioeconomic analyses, etc.
- Better integration of social considerations into the national research agendas.
- Better storytelling around forest issues, such as developing and implementing a more proactive communication strategy (including the value of healthy forests, the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation, early detection and prevention efforts, etc.).
- Increased accessibility of science in response to increased public scrutiny.

## Highlights from program-specific discussions

### Cumulative Effects:

- The need for increased statistical power, modelling, and tools to assess risks, integrate data and inform decisions at a variety of scales.
- The identification of common objectives and appropriate indicators for landscape analysis is a challenge; a common platform or tool to collectively assess landscape level issues was proposed.

### Fibre Solutions:

- Fibre supply needs to be managed in the context of a changing climate (e.g. impacts on supply and social licence).
- In light of declining provincial capacity, more research on tree improvement research is needed.
- Different focus of genomics research such as tree resilience and pest resistance.
- It was recommended that the CWFC focus its branding on “trees,” rather than on wood fibre.

### Forest Climate Change:

- Social factors (e.g. social resilience, social vulnerability and community considerations) are not being well integrated in current climate change research.
- There is a need to better communicate uncertainty in climate change projections and provide scientific information at a more local level (forest management unit).
- Resources for monitoring work are decreasing, affecting model calibration and reliability. It was recommended that at a minimum current monitoring efforts continue.

### Pest Risk Management:

- CFS must maintain expertise on pests – CFS provides a lot of fundamental science that supports others' needs.
- Canada needs an agile management system to foster collaboration and re-prioritize to respond to emerging issues, including assessment of environmental impacts from forest pests.
- Modernized pest detection and monitoring tools and techniques are needed to enable faster action, and for more flexibility to use novel/experimental response tools and techniques.

### Strengthening Forest Sector Competitiveness:

- Transport cost (e.g. rail), labour shortages, caribou conservation/management are critical issues.
- Wood chip supply is also an issue. Uneven regional supply may result in mill closures.
- The need to enable an environment for less technology push and more market pull.
- Potential opportunities include re-examining bio-pathways models to assist in investment decisions; ensuring Canada and the forest sector are developing a holistic supply chain model/analysis.

### Sustainable Forest Management:

- It was recommended that CFS be a provider of better, more authoritative data to facilitate standardized monitoring.
- There is a need for relevant indicators to better report on ecosystem and social trends and that resonate with the public, and for research that demonstrates how current management practices are contributing to SFM.

### Wildfire Risk Management:

- Science is important to inform policy and operational decisions, e.g. cost-benefit analysis, risk analysis, investment decisions, fire suppression operations. There is a need to provide analysis and information at scales that are useful for decision-making; small communities in forested areas are particularly vulnerable to wildland fire; this includes First Nations communities.
- Post-Fire considerations are very important. Salvage requires special health/safety/technical considerations; and more information is required on expected future conditions.

The CFS Science Policy workshop was the start of a conversation. CFS is organizing a national conference in winter 2018 to further discuss the research agendas and their implementation.