



Natural Resources
Canada

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Canada



Aboriginal Communities and Forestry



Forests play a central role – culturally, spiritually and economically – in the lives of many Aboriginal communities across Canada. This importance is growing as more forest land is coming under First Nations control and management, more Aboriginal youth are working in forestry, and the business sector is actively seeking Aboriginal co-venture partners and contractors.

Canada

Forestry and forest-based economic development are key opportunities, particularly for First Nations communities in Canada's forest regions.

First Nation Communities and Forest Regions in Canada



Trends in Aboriginal forestry

Labour force

The 2006 Census shows that Canada's Aboriginal population is youthful and growing.

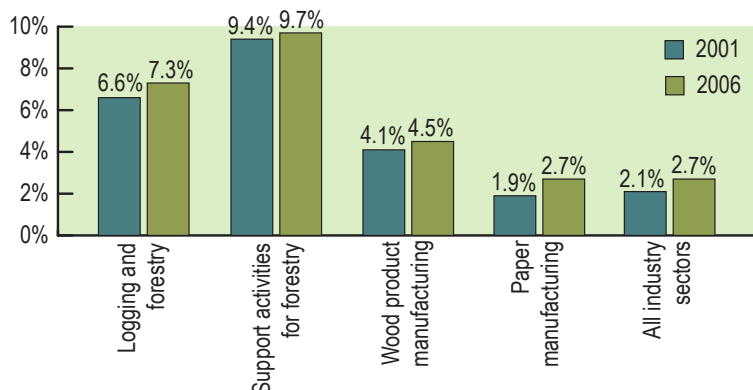
- In 2006, 3.5 percent of the Aboriginal labour force worked in the forest sector, compared with 1.8 percent of the non-Aboriginal labour force.
- The median age of Aboriginal people was 27, compared with 40 for the non-Aboriginal population.
- Aboriginal youth (age 15 to 24) constituted 17.6 percent of the Aboriginal labour force in the forest sector, compared with 13.1 percent for non-Aboriginal youth.
- In 2006, Aboriginal women represented 14 percent of the Aboriginal labour force in the forest sector, compared with 16.4 percent for non-Aboriginal women.

Skills development

The skill levels of Aboriginal workers in the forest sector are increasing and the number of Aboriginal forestry professionals is growing (2006 Census).

- In 2006, Aboriginal people held 1.9 percent of the forest sector managerial positions, compared with 1.8 percent in 2001.
- There are now over 225 Aboriginal forestry professionals and 800 Aboriginal forestry technologists and technicians.
- From 1996 to 2006, the number of Aboriginal apprentices in forestry-related occupations increased by 80.2 percent.

Percentage of Aboriginal Workers Comprising the Employed Labour Force in the Forest Industry Sub-Sectors, 2001-2006



Source: 2001 and 2006 Statistics Canada censuses, compiled by the Canadian Forest Service.



Business development

Aboriginal people are increasingly involved in forest-based activities through contracting and business development – in activities such as harvesting, wood processing, trucking, forest management, non-timber forest products and consulting services.

- There are more than 1500 Aboriginal-owned forestry businesses. They represent 8.6 percent of businesses located on reserves (Aboriginal Entrepreneurs Survey, Aboriginal Business Canada, 2002).
- Over 60 percent of self-employed Aboriginal forestry workers were employed in the logging and forestry sub-sector (2006 census).
- Almost two thirds of self-employed Aboriginal workers reported participation in the forest sector (2006 census).

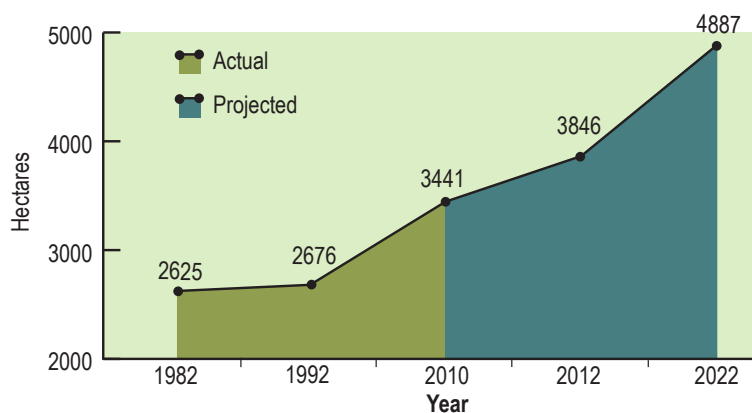
Forested land base

Communities are managing and increasing their forested land base.

- Self-government agreements and treaty settlements have transferred control and management responsibilities to First Nations for almost 1.8 million hectares of land across Canada. Much of this is forested land, which presents forest-based economic opportunities for community members.
- Several communities have secured forest co-management, tenure and licensing arrangements with industry and the provinces/territories.
- Five First Nations communities have achieved certification for the forest land they manage – almost 2 million hectares (Certification Canada, 2009).



Growth in Reserve Land Hectareage - Actual and Projected



Source: Lands and Economic Development Sector, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (2010).

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