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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, April 8, 2014**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault**



## Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

•(0845)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair (Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP)):** Order, please. We are going to start our 19th meeting right away.

As today's agenda indicates, we will hear from two witnesses. The first is here in the room with us. Mr. Pineau is the Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Institute of Forestry. Also joining us today by videoconference is Mr. Mallett, who is the Chief Economist and Vice-President of Research with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

These two guests will of course be giving evidence in the context of our study on the government's open data practices.

As usual, each witness will have 10 minutes to give their presentation. The committee members will then be able to ask questions.

Mr. Pineau, you have the floor. You have 10 minutes.

[*English*]

Thank you for your presence.

**Mr. John Pineau (Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Institute of Forestry):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to start off by first thanking the committee for asking me to testify. I think this is my fifth testimony in eight years. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of our membership.

I'll start by telling you a little bit about the Canadian Institute of Forestry or l'Institut forestier du Canada. It's a national non-profit association of forest practitioners and professionals, but also very much natural resource and integrated land managers, people who are responsible ultimately for making sure that forestry and natural resource management is well done on the land base across Canada.

We have about 2,700 members—maybe closer to 2,800 members—in all provinces and territories. We're organized in 19 sections. We've been around for about 106 years.

The principal mandate of the institute is continuing education and professional development for our members, making sure that we keep forest professionals or practitioners competent and up to date on the latest science and research that comes out across Canada from many sources and from around the world. We're very much into knowledge exchange and extension work. We are constantly, across our 19 sections, holding various events—conferences, workshops, seminars, field tours, courses—all intended to help our members stay

competent and be on top of things forestry-related and natural resources-related.

We are also responsible and very much cognizant of the need to speak out objectively, constructively, and with balance on forestry and natural resources management issues and challenges. That sets us apart, much of the time. It seems that every month or every few weeks we will speak out through a media release, an editorial, or an appropriate letter to government, industry, or academia that puts us in a position to comment positively and constructively on even the most difficult forestry-related issues and try to come up with and offer solutions to these issues and challenges.

It's not always easy, with a membership of 2,700 or 2,800, but somehow we manage to do it, and collectively we have been the voice of forest practitioners for many decades.

That, in essence, is the institute. We're growing and expanding our membership; we've developed programs that allow us to communicate well the outputs and results of good science and research through publications, through webinars and e-lectures, and through all sorts of national initiatives.

What interested me about testifying to this committee is that so much of what we do and so much of what we offer to our members and to our partners and affiliates as well is based on or has a foundation in having access to good quality data in every respect, whether it comes from university science and research or from government sources or from what in essence companies or industry collect by way of data. Very often it is cooperatives that collect data and store it, maintain it, and distribute it. I see more and more of that across Canada, and I think it's a very good model.

I just learned about a data cooperative in Alberta that looks at growth in yield—measurements in the forest to determine how well and how fast trees are growing. Everyone was doing their own thing until recently.

The groups there got together—the companies, the Government of Alberta, other interested parties—and were able in essence to pool their resources, their time, their effort to make something that was rather disparate and not all that cooperative work really well. The result saves money and time, and you have better data not only to manage the forest for timber and fibre, but also to manage the ecosystems and the ecology and maintain the social licence to do all those things—the biodiversity, the wildlife habitat.

I'm very keen on that sort of model and open sharing of data. I could give lots of examples from across the country and from other countries as well for which I've become familiar with how they handle these sorts of things and what they do.

● (0850)

I know that the mandate of this committee goes beyond natural resource and forestry types of data, but that sort of information and the groundwork that is there is the basis of much of the prosperity of this country in terms of making good business decisions—everything from where to place or build a mill or add a new line in a mill to the way we manage the forest for the sake of the water, the wildlife, the habitat, the biodiversity—all those sorts of things. It's essential to good forest management and to modern interdisciplinary forestry, which is far more than just extraction now.

It has evolved in the last few decades—in the last century, as a matter of fact—to be something that allows us, as the saying goes, to have our cake and eat it too. With good forestry, we can have economic prosperity, keep ecological processes maintained and sometimes enhanced, and have social stability. All is based on good data and the information you can derive from that data.

Our institute is very much involved in that sort of endeavour. Our members individually in their jobs are involved in it. We as an organization promote as much as possible and where possible the open sharing of data. We like the idea of portals.

There are always proprietary issues. Scientists and researchers who want to publish based on data they've collected might want to keep it under wraps for a while until they get to the point that they publish it, and they need some security. Certainly privacy issues and that sort of thing come into play, and often it's an issue that depends on who has paid for it or who has been involved in its development and production. But in general, as much as possible we like to see natural resources and forestry data openly shared. It's for the betterment of forest management.

I don't really have much else to say in my opening statement, but that sums up what we're about, what we do, and what we believe.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Pineau.

Without further ado, I will give the floor to Mr. Ted Mallett, Chief Economist and Vice-President of Research with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, who is joining us from Toronto.

Mr. Mallett, you have 10 minutes for your presentation. The committee members will then be able to ask you questions.

Thank you for being here this morning. You have the floor.

● (0855)

[*English*]

**Mr. Ted Mallett (Vice-President and Chief Economist, Canadian Federation of Independent Business):** It's a pleasure to speak with you here today.

This is something that has been close to me for quite some time. I've spent, really, my entire career in the information field, from the standpoint of an analyst seeking macro information to understand the top-down workings of the economy and society, creating micro

information on the behaviours of individuals and businesses as they work through, and also, from a bottom-up perspective with CFIB, representing the interests of small-business owners who are looking for relevant information on how to bolster their chances of growth and success, and so on.

Incidentally, my first job after graduation in the early eighties was working for a third party database company reselling StatCan databases and other forms of databases. Part of my job was teaching people how to access this information and use it within their business context.

I also have a long history working with StatCan. I was part of their working group on small-area data in the early nineties, and that was how they could publish information right down to very specific areas geographically that would be useful for small businesses. I worked with them on small-business connectedness issues—that is, the people who were beginning to access the Internet, develop their own interconnected techniques, and so on. Again, it was a big issue back in the mid-nineties.

I've certainly lobbied government for decades to remove the paywall that StatCan had around CANSIM and many of the other databases and information products it had, especially where the marginal cost of providing that information had fallen to zero. The information was already there; therefore, there was very little cost to making it available to people, and we knew that our members were not using the information on a per-database or a per-data series point of view.

I was also very pleased in the past couple of years that StatCan has made this available now for free, and I'm sure I'd be very interested to see what their usage numbers have been as a result of that. I think there has probably been a tremendous increase in utilization of this important resource.

Partway through my discussions with them in the past, starting as an analyst looking at information about small firms, I really recommended that they start looking at getting information for small firms. They have a different set of needs that are out there. We're hoping that information can be available to them that makes the most sense for their particular context.

Most currently, I'm also a member of the business to business committee at the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association of Canada, working with them to develop products and services to help businesses understand other businesses. Not all firms deal in the consumer space, but they do need to understand not just their consumer marketplace but also the products, the businesses, their competitors, and so on.

My perspective on this issue is that Canada has long lagged behind other countries, particularly the U.S., in publishing free or low-cost information that could help in aiding businesses and their understanding of the economy. We've really raised here a couple of generations of business owners who have been, effectively, trained not to look for this kind of information. They've never known that it was available. They haven't worked it into their own business strategies and understandings and so on. It's going to take some time for them to realize.

There has been some progress in the past couple of years, and I'm happy to see that. But I think it's still taking time for that kind of realization to sink in. We're hoping that successive products and perhaps some third party businesses will better help to bring this information into the marketplace.

We certainly know that the cost puts custom data from private sources really out of the reach of small firms. Most of the custom business-to-business data services by the private industry are really working towards the big business sector, and small firms don't typically get that information. The information is costly to get. But you really don't understand its value. You can't judge its value until after you've acquired it and then tried it within your own business. That can be a long process, and it really provides a large wall in front of any firm that's looking for information to try to make the business better.

- (0900)

We also understand that the smaller the business, the less relevant that aggregate macro-data gets. It doesn't make sense for a small firm to understand more detailed information, say, on gross domestic product, aggregate employment levels by province, or whatever. The smaller the firm, the more details begin to matter, really granular information by very small sector, city, town, or neighbourhood, trying to understand their marketplace. Their focus tends to be on very limited geographic areas, and those are the kinds of data that would make most sense for small firms. Really, what they're looking for is information on their customers, products, and competitors.

In putting some notes together for this presentation, I've put a few thoughts into what the keys to success are in this. I've looked at data.gc.ca; I'm very happy to see that. I also see that the publishing dataset goals are helpful, but the value will come from how often they're used, and I'm hoping you'll be able to work through the monitoring of the usage of the access of this information as one of your metrics in this particular project.

Data that helps people or businesses link publicly available data with their own privately held information is also crucial. I think the geo-spatial information is going to be pretty important here. Boundary files are not generally available easily, depending on what kind of software you're using, of course. But we need to see publicly available geo-spatial boundary files, not just at the census metropolitan area, but at almost every level of geographic disaggregation, including federal ridings and definitely down to the city, town, and neighbourhood levels.

We also think forward-looking data is much more important than backward-looking data. History is important, but looking at much of the economy depends on identifying trends that deviate from history. That's where small firms are perhaps of real benefit to the economy; they identify these kinds of trends first. So if the information can be put up that.... It's hard to predict this, but that's really the kind of source information they're looking for, something that provides them with an insight that hasn't been available to others.

In terms of the emergence of information value adds—and this can be with many small firms as well—that provide the value-added information to these databases and then distribute to customers who they understand much better, I think the government can do a great deal in terms of getting the word out about this information and

what's available. But getting it into the marketplace, especially the business marketplace, is going to need the help of some intermediaries. We think that encouraging them to take part and develop products along those lines is very helpful.

We've learned lessons in terms of how macro people look at the world and information versus how micro people look at it. A good example is an initiative by CFIB called Small Business Saturday. We asked our members if they wanted to offer particular deals or promotions in their businesses for a particular Saturday in October, and then we would publish that information on a website. Customers would be able to go to that website and search by neighbourhood or type of business what they're looking for. We structured it by industry type, and that was the way we always tended to look at the information. But what we learned very quickly was that customers tend not to look at it by industry. They're not trained to look at it by six codes and so on. They look at things by product. They're interested in buying shoes or in looking for lawn mowers; they don't tend to look at it by type of store, but they really go right down to their need of what products they're looking for.

- (0905)

So that helped us in structuring information in the way that the consumer was most interested in receiving it.

Certainly quality also matters. CFIB has had some semi-bad experience with the federal riding and postal code data because there were numerous errors within that database that Statistics Canada provides. Therefore boundary files would be a welcome improvement on that. It would really help in dealing with those kinds of issues.

Also getting more to what CFIB is looking for, drawing more levels of government into this process would be very helpful. Standardization on governance and financial information is pretty critical. We've noted that the Alberta government did a major departure from standard budget accounting that makes it very difficult to look at their province's fiscal performance over a number of years and very difficult to compare with other provinces as a result. Municipalities are all over the map in the way that they present their financial information.

We also know that pre-built two-dimensional or three-dimensional tables don't always work terribly well with providing information. Therefore we think micro-data is the way to go as much as possible, as long as privacy and confidentiality is maintained within this sort of database. Micro-data allows the customer to be able to cut or aggregate information along the lines that they're really looking for.

We're also missing relevant data that would really assist policy-makers. Tax incidence studies are all but impossible because Statistics Canada just has been unable to clean their corporate dataset sufficiently to be able to get back other information. Property tax policy is a mess because of the lack of standardized information collected from the local levels.

So I think there's an awful lot of progress being made and we're very happy to see this initiative, but we also know that there's a great deal of opportunity for future work. We're happy to help out along those lines.

Thank you very much.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** I'm going to have to interrupt you, since you are out of time.

We will now go to questions from committee members, beginning with Mr. Martin, who has five minutes.

[English]

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you very much, Mr. Pineau and Mr. Mallett.

As tempted as I am to build right off from Mr. Mallett's statements, I would like to begin with Mr. Pineau briefly.

Mr. Pineau, from a forest industry point of view, let me start by saying you have an absolute right to know any research that your government has been doing on behalf of the Canadian public. It's one of the fundamental cornerstones of our democracy that the public has a right to know. Freedom of information is an important principle that I don't think we spend enough time on.

My concern is that you're only getting access to the data that the government chooses to share with you in terms of research documents, etc. I know that your organization probably makes good use of data.gc.ca or at least other sources of research and information.

With the pattern that we've seen develop, a worrisome pattern of the muzzling of scientists and of the hoarding of information if it may be potentially embarrassing to the government—or if it's not completely in keeping with a policy that they're trying to promote or develop—what assurance do you have that you're getting access to all of the research information that the government is doing? And has your organization been frustrated or stymied in trying to get access to documentation and research that you'd be interested in?

**Mr. John Pineau:** That's a very good question. I don't think at the federal level our members would say they've been that frustrated. We work with the Great Lakes Forestry Centre, for instance; the Atlantic Forestry Centre, the Pacific Forestry Centre; the Northern Forestry Centre; and the Canadian Wood Fibre Centre. Our institute has a lot of connections to some very excellent government departments in the Canadian Forest Service. FPInnovations is a government-run company.

I think what happens, in general, at the federal level is the science and research there is published, and that's great. What maybe tends to be problematic is when there are partnerships or cooperative research undertakings where data is produced, and some of the

organizations have paid some money or membership dues to produce that work, that data, the outputs, and results of that research, and it tends to be restricted a lot of the time to the members who have paid. That's where there's a little bit of a problem.

And I can understand that to some degree. If you're in a cooperative arrangement where it's government, industry, academia—quite a few players—and some of those players are paying money up front to get the science and research done, they might have a proprietary right. I'm not saying it's definite or absolute, but at least it's to get it first or to receive what they paid for. That's where there are some problems, but, in general, with the federal government and the Forest Service, and these other organizations I've named, it's been a pretty good relationship, and there's a really good sharing of information there.

•(0910)

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Thanks for that, Mr. Pineau.

Mr. Mallett, I have very little time, so I'm going to shift directly over to you.

I was interested in what you were saying about the need for free access to information, or easy access to information. I'm concerned about two things. Have your membership found that the information put forward on data.gc.ca is in a user-friendly format or a standardized format to the degree that it's accessible to your members?

I'll ask you to comment on a second thing as well. Do you believe that the cancellation of the long form census had a bearing on the quality or reliability of information that your membership needs in their long-range planning, etc., for the small-business community? Has that had a bearing or effect? Does your organization have any formal opinion on the difference, now that we have cancelled the long form census, or the obligation to fill out the long form census?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** Why don't I start with the last question first?

We did come out very strongly at the time of the cancellation. We supported the original long form census. We disagreed with the idea that it should be moved without a careful look at the data quality that could come out of it. We don't think it's a huge issue for the small-business owners, in particular, because a lot of that is trend information.

I think there's tremendous information still within the national household survey. There are some identified weak spots. I think they're pretty well known at this point, but there's still a lot of valuable information. The biggest problem is, to what degree are you able to see trend information from previous census runs, and so on? While we would have preferred to see a continuation of the approach of the long form census, we don't think it is a huge detriment to small firms moving forward, because they want a perspective that looks forward as opposed to one that looks back.

On your first question, it's difficult to say. We haven't had any direct contact with our members about data.gc.ca. I found it...I understand. I've put together website structures and data structures before. I know how challenging it is to present information to a wide audience that has very different needs and interests. It's very difficult to organize that kind of data. We think it's a good start, but the government will have to look at ways of seeing which datasets are used, and also look at it from the perspective of the customer. We think it probably could be improved in the future, but I can't give you any concrete suggestions at this point because a lot of this is trial and error.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you for your answers.

Ms. Ablonczy, you have the floor for five minutes.

• (0915)

[English]

**Hon. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, CPC):** Thank you.

And thank you both for appearing. Mr. Mallett, I notice you have a very fancy desk there.... Is the CFIB on a cost-cutting spree here?

As you know, part of our study is examining how Canadian businesses can better obtain and utilize high-value information with strong economic potential. Today we're looking at this part of the study.

Mr. Mallett said forward-looking data is more important. I think it's fair to say that most government data is not only looking back, it looks back over some time gap. It takes a while to get these things posted. Mr. Pineau mentioned the need for good data.

I want to drill down on those two comments and ask both of you what you as an end-user need to see in terms of quality from government, and the degree to which you think there's a gap, and how you as an end-user would recommend that gap be bridged.

Maybe you could begin, Mr. Mallett.

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** Sure. Those are all good questions. It's very difficult to provide forward-looking information because you don't know the future. You don't have data on the future of course.

But what we heard from members, particularly on StatsCan industry survey information and so on, is that timeliness tends to be an issue. They are getting information about a sector that's now two or three years old. Are they getting a whole lot of information out of that? This is the difficulty with any sort of data collector, and we have had long discussions with StatsCan on this to find solutions.

We thank them for taking this very seriously. But the good information about industries and sectors can only come from industries or businesses, and people filling out these surveys. The difficulty level can be quite high, and the burden can be quite high.

To a large degree and as much as it is able, StatsCan is getting administrative data from other sources—CRA and so on—and trying to keep the load as light as possible on the smallest businesses, particularly those in smaller economic areas, whether it's smaller provinces, the territories, and so on.

If you want more complete information about a sector, you actually have to go survey them, and that puts more of a burden on collecting information. This is one of the reasons why we really pushed for getting free information back to the businesses because if they were providing this information for free to government, then at least they should be getting this information back as quickly as possible and without cost as well. They are the ones providing much of the data that is then being repackaged, and developed, and so on.

So yes, we understand. I did say forward-looking but....

**Hon. Diane Ablonczy:** Sorry to interrupt you, I just want to give some time for Mr. Pineau before the chairman cuts us off.

**Mr. John Pineau:** It's a really good question. I'll give my personal perspective on it.

I've worked both in industry and government in several provinces prior to my position with the Canadian Institute of Forestry. The one thing that always seemed to dominate was the cost of getting good data. Really it's an investment. We have to get our mindset changed to that.

It was often a hot potato as a result of that mindset that it is a cost only. Something like a forest inventory, which is the basis, is a snapshot of what the forest looks like right now, but moving forward you project, you model, you determine what it's going to look like in the future, what you can sustainably harvest, and how you can maintain the ecosystems, and all that. It is an investment in understanding your business moving forward.

That hot potato bounces back and forth. Sometimes it's the industry responsible for gathering that data and producing the inventories and the datasets. Sometimes it's the government. Sometimes it's a combination of both, but it's because it's seen as a cost rather than an investment.

If I could make a perfect world in the forest sector and enable the development of things like sustainable biomass or bioenergy and all of the new products we're looking at, and the whole rejigging of the forest sector that's coming down the pipe, I would somehow make it so that data could be produced, it would be seen as an investment cooperatively, and it would be openly available to entrepreneurs, companies, and people who hold tenure, as well as the government regulators and the staff who are trying to help manage and monitor what's going on.

I hope that's relevant, but that's how I see it.

• (0920)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Day, you also have five minutes.

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wish to thank the witnesses for joining us for today's meeting. Your evidence will definitely enlighten us.

I would like to revisit a few points that were raised.

We know, for example, that the G8 Open Data Charter calls for open data by default, that the data be high quality and of a certain quantity, and that they be usable by all.

Mr. Mallett, one of the things you emphasized was the importance of interaction between the government and data users, even suggesting that those users could add data to the portals.

What form should the interaction between open data portals managers and their users, between the government and your members, take?

[English]

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** It's tough to generalize. We represent such a wide variety of businesses in the country.

I think there is an opportunity for businesses to specialize—and we've known of businesses that specialize—in transferring government information to a form that their specific customers are most interested in. It would be difficult for government to fully package information to be usable by every particular business out there; we think that the intermediary approach works.

But it is going to be very entrepreneurial, in that sense. If the information is available and the intermediary understands what information is there and also understands that there is a marketplace for value-added information, they add information to it, perhaps add their own insight, and so on, and then resell it to other businesses within their particular sphere. That's how it would work.

What we're trying to say is that this sort of relationship should be encouraged. We can't tell specifically what form it always should take, but there should be an understanding that information will pass through a number of layers of value adders before it gets out to the people who need it most.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** You also said that the value of the database will depend on how it is used. According to the data available, it was used most often in February 2014, when there were 613 downloads related to Natural Resources Canada.

Do you have the figures on usage in relation to forestry, for instance? Do entrepreneurs use the information provided? How could we make it more visible and more transparent for users?

[English]

**Mr. John Pineau:** That's a really good question. I would say that we don't have a lot of data readily available or open to business development or the entrepreneurial side of business. I think there's an opportunity, with Canada and all these jurisdictions—the provinces and so on—through a body such as the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, if they could be given the mandate and the support, to promote and encourage data sharing and standardization and make it available through the portal to potential entrepreneurs.

I see some frustration among people who want to develop something in the forest sector. It's not always based on data; sometimes it's tenure, a question of who holds the licence for using public land. Very often there's that sort of restriction or impediment to seeing this kind of development or that kind of opportunity happen. There are other issues at play besides the open availability of data.

● (0925)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Day.

We will now go to Mr. Aspin, who has five minutes.

[English]

**Mr. Jay Aspin (Nipissing—Timiskaming, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome, gentlemen. Thank you for providing time to share your ideas on our study.

I have two questions, one for each of you. First I'll go to Mr. Mallett.

Mr. Mallett, you made the statement that in Canada we have long lagged behind the U.S. in this field. I'd like to get your thoughts on how we could possibly catch up.

In line with that, what data is most likely to encourage the growth of SMEs?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** I think where we've seen a lot of information available in the States is getting down to very small geographic levels, neighbourhood levels, so that businesses can perhaps better identify location preferences, where they should be investing their funds and equipment, where there are opportunities for underserved sectors, and so on. To the degree that we can get information about very specific neighbourhood-level detail, and this can be census information, this can be household survey information to a large degree, that would help businesses make smarter decisions.

To grow they need to invest, but are they making the best investments? Tough to determine, because there are many different types of small firms out there. Some of them deal with business to business, others deal with the consumer sector, so all their needs and their data needs are going to be quite different in that respect. But to the degree that we can get very specific data to people, both on a granular industry level, as well as on a granular geographic level, that would be a good start.

Then let's see where the demand takes us, because I think it will be those third party or the intermediary providers that then start asking if we can please parse this information this way or that; and that'll take you in the direction that you should probably move.

**Mr. Jay Aspin:** Okay. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Pineau, I'm quite familiar with the Canadian Institute of Forestry, it's in my riding, and the good work that you do, John.

I was wondering if you could paint us a picture of the types of data that you foresee as a result of this initiative, particularly in the raw forestry line.

**Mr. John Pineau:** Again, thanks, Jay, and thanks for your comments on the institute. It's great for our national office to be located in your riding.



. We've worked on some things before with the biomass and bioenergy side of things, so I use that as an example. But even coarse-level data that tells interested parties or entrepreneurs what's possible, what's available in biomass, for instance, in a forest and what can be sustainably harvested, we've got lots of metrics on that, lots of good understanding on sustainability and what we can take and what we can leave to ensure ecosystem process and that sort of thing.

But even at a coarse level, if that were available for entrepreneurs, say, through a national forest inventory, and I know the Canadian Forest Service has worked on that for many years maintaining and keeping that up to date, that would help. They might get an idea, and of course, you'd have to temper it or look at it in the context of what else is there and that would probably be some socio-economic data, what mills are there, what population base, and that sort of thing, what is possible in terms of biomass harvesting. New York state, for instance, has a very open data policy on that type of availability.

I think it was a biomass session at Queen's University that I attended a few years ago that encouraged the entrepreneurial spirit and at least the planning of the examination of what was possible in biomass harvest and getting the bioeconomy up and running.

• (0930)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Aspin.

I now give the floor to Mr. Byrne, for five minutes.

[*English*]

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Mallett, regarding the notion of the competitive impact of exposing information broadly and widely from a business point of view, there are obviously, clearly, great merits in your membership having access to a dataset to be able to make informed decisions.

The converse is also true, that would-be competitors with, say, your membership would also have access to the data. Is that a concern that CFIB might have? Would you like to articulate if you have any concerns on the reverse side of the argument?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** It's always valuable to consider that side of things. Marketplaces work far better wherever there is better access to information; there are fewer mistakes made. I think that generally competition has good impacts on the economic structure, because successful businesses generally develop successful follow-on businesses up and down the value chain. We think the benefits of the provision of information far outweigh the potential downsides of providing a wide swath of information.

Especially if we're talking about broad-level public information that's collected by government and so on, there is no reason that it should be hoarded or kept only for a particular, small group of businesses. It may be different, of course, from the information that the business collects by themselves about their customers concerning how they react to price or product differentials and so on; that's what they decide to hold on to. The degree to which they want to share it with their suppliers or customers or businesses within a specific

sector would be up to them. But in general, we think more information is better for a sound economy than less.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I'll direct a question now to Mr. Pineau.

Mr. Pineau, is there anything in particular that you find frustrating or aggravating concerning access to information or data—say, for example, from the point of view that it costs money for those within your organization to access it—that you'd like to see the government change so as to have it available on the portal?

**Mr. John Pineau:** It goes back to my earlier response. At the risk of repeating myself, it's the idea that it's a cost rather than an investment. That's an enormous frustration for many of us.

There are many individual top-quality datasets out there that individual scientists, researchers, or groups have produced over the years. Not enough of it is digitized and made available digitally. There are still huge and very valuable treasure troves, as I call them, of data that is all on paper still.

I can give one really good example, and they're actually doing something really good about it; there is a lot of scanning and digitizing of this data. The Petawawa Research Forest, just up the valley here from Ottawa, is an amazing storage facility full of great data collected over the better part of a century. It is starting just now to be digitized and made available.

I think that's a great investment. Those sorts of datasets can really give us the history and help us understand the past and better understand and project a model of where we're going in the future. Investment in these sorts of endeavours to get data digitized—and there are other stories and places like Petawawa Research Forest—is a great investment.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Mr. Mallett, was there anything in particular that you would like to add, in terms of frustration or of a bugbear that you'd like to air?

• (0935)

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** I don't have frustrations. I think we've seen some progress. We're very happy to see that CANSIM and many of the micro-data series have been freed up by StatsCan. We would like to see more micro-data provided, because it provides very informative sets of information for small firms, and not tabular data, because it tends to be very rigid and specific to a far more macro view of things.

I'd like to see more progress. I think that's really what we're looking forward to. We're happy to provide as much insight and information as we can. When you start getting more specific on particular avenues of information or particular types of information, I'm sure we can provide some additional insight. But because we're starting off at a fairly high level, I'm giving you the broad perspective at this point.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** I now turn the floor over to Mr. Trotter, for five minutes.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bernard Trotter (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you, guests, for being here.

One of the things we decided when we wanted to figure out what kind of witnesses would be relevant for this study was to determine who the customers were. Any time you're doing a business analysis, that's always the best place to start. One approach could have been to talk about what the different government departments are doing, but we thought we'd ask different customers of data, customers of the government, if you will, what kinds of information and what formats for that information they need. That's why we decided to take a cross-section of important sectors of the economy such as forestry, for example, and fishing and farming, small businesses and mining, and so on. So it's really valuable that you're intervening and giving us some guidance in terms of the government's direction with respect to open data.

I appreciate your comments, Mr. Mallett, about the local area data being very relevant for small business. It's a big challenge. I know in consumer packaged goods, for example, that large grocery chains will buy datasets from companies like Nielsen, Spectra, and IRI and they'll get very local information with respect to demand for categories of products. For example, they can get some insight into sales of basmati rice versus traditional long-grain rice versus arborio rice then they can start making certain business decisions based on that. They can look at gluten-free products, what's happening in that category, and then they can make some responses.

There's a real barrier for small businesses when it comes to buying that data because it's expensive. Now, these are companies that are in the business of providing that kind of information. I know that CFIB represents a very broad cross-section of businesses, but in areas like this is there something where the government can provide that information? It's information that the government collects, and it would be provided to small businesses...they can make certain investment decisions and business decisions. Can you think of examples of the kind of information that might be out there? And again, thinking across all of the different departments of government—immigration, health, natural resources; there's so much out there—what would small businesses be looking for?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** The one issue, the one item that I've been chatting with StatsCan about for many years has been how to help small businesses plan their businesses better. We understand they probably can't find good data on basmati rice consumption within Arnprior, Ontario. It's just not available, that kind of level of information. But the kind of information that they're looking for that would be helpful—and we've actually tried to develop a product along these lines and it's still in the back of my mind as well—has to do with helping them with their costs. Do they have a good sense of what the particular wage rates or market are like within their area? There's tremendous variation in wages by skill set, by industry type, by location, and so on, but for a small greengrocer in a downtown neighbourhood, can that grocer find the right information about what is a typical wage rate or what the range is between the 25th and 75th percentile for wage rates for people with these particular skills, this amount of experience, and so on, so then they can see whether they are paying sufficiently in the marketplace, are they over the market wage, or what?

So we think those kinds of products would be helpful. You may have to splice together a number of databases to be able to get to that

kind of information and it may be imputed to some degree. It may not be direct information but it may be when you put two curves together then you're able to infer what it may look like. You may know that a particular town is  $x$  per cent above or below the provincial average but you also know that this industry is  $x$  per cent above or below the provincial average, or this particular skill set or amount of experience is above or below.

So you could probably impute something down to a very specific level to help a business understand wage levels and price changes, as well as rates of inflation, products, and so on. We think there's an opportunity to impute more information that would probably be very helpful to small firms in that respect.

● (0940)

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Thank you, Mr. Mallett.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** I am going to have to interrupt you, as we have only five seconds left.

I now give the floor to Ms. Day, for five minutes.

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to come back to Mr. Pineau, because the forestry sector is very interesting.

We know that forestry has had a taste of this over the past few years. The decrease in forestry exports and all the consequences that go along with that are one of Canada's economic problems. Access to information is extremely important. We also know that access to information requests take a very long time to be processed. There is a lot of chatting, and the response is sometimes “restricted”.

In a field where people should have access to universal data, for example on data transparency and the use of open data, would you not agree that there needs to be better coordination between departments in order to provide data?

We know very well that if you decide to harvest a forest, for example, you have to take environmental data into account, such as the caribou that live there. Should there not be better coordination between departments in order to ensure more comprehensive data for users?

[*English*]

**Mr. John Pineau:** That's a very good point. Definitely there's always a need for better coordination and more cooperation between not just government departments but government and industry, industry and industry, any of the players that have an interest in what goes on with the land base.

It's the case now where when I speak of forest management and ultimately the data and the information that enables that in a sustainable way, I'm not just speaking about forest management. It's integrated land management; it's natural resources management. It's a very complex and interdisciplinary focus. Just maintaining the social licence, having people agree that it's okay what we're doing on the land and they basically support it, as well as making customers of Canadian forest products happy and confident that they are coming from sustainably managed forests, if we had better data integration, better data-sharing, cooperation from the very start when we're collecting the data to how we handle it, manage it, distribute it, then we'd be doing Canada and Canadian business a favour in terms of informing customers and the public in general of the sustainability of forest management.

People are far more likely and confident in purchasing forest products from Canada when they know that our data is good and that the decisions we're making on how we're deciding to manage the forests are informed by good data and information.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** My next question is for Mr. Pineau and Mr. Mallett.

Were either you or your partners consulted or asked to take part in this kind of data collection and distribution of shared data? Apart from being invited to this committee meeting, were you consulted in any way?

[English]

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** No, I received the invitation to appear before the committee. I've worked with, as I said, various parts of government over the past couple of decades, but specifically on the data.gc.ca, I hadn't been in discussions with that.

My role isn't necessarily on the legislative side. Perhaps our Ottawa office was consulted and so on. But for me personally, this is my first direct presentation today on this issue.

• (0945)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** As part of the Institute of Forestry, did you take part in any huge, extensive consultation?

[English]

**Mr. John Pineau:** No, this is the first time I've heard about this. It's good that we were asked to testify, but I'm kind of keen to learn more. I gave the website a good look and did a little bit of research in advance of the testimony, but that's about it. It's a good initiative and I'm happy that we were invited, but that's about it right now.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Day, but you are out of time.

I now give the floor to Mr. O'Connor, for five minutes.

[English]

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Carleton—Mississippi Mills, CPC):** Gentlemen, we're basically talking about government data that's in various departments. It would seem to me that if I was a representative of some part of industry, I would make a list of the kinds of information that I need, my customers need, and I'd provide

it to the government to see if they could do it. Have you thought of anything like that?

I'll start with Mr. Mallett.

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** I think the information that we wanted to collect has been largely along the lines of specific wage and price information. Actually, getting back to some of the information that we've been very happy with in the past, and that we recommended other members go see, is information pulled by Industry Canada from StatsCan on small-business benchmarking. It has very specific industry level financial indicators that help businesses understand what are typical financial ratios and relationships within their particular sector. Also, they're able to put some of their own financials in there to see if they are running above or below the general performance of businesses within their particular sector. So we strongly support those kinds of roles and so on.

Part of our challenge, and yours as well, is that we're dealing with such a wide variety of businesses, some of which are very forward-looking and probably have more information than we even know that they have, and they're using it very well, and others that really have no idea that this information is out there, and perhaps could help them in that respect. We've got such a wide variance that we want to support and so on. We're just trying to find a good average level of information that would help them.

In general, I think to the degree that we can find, again, the geographic detail...

Maybe one example that we've noted is that if you're looking for business register information, and that is what types of businesses are around in specific geographic regions, you can purchase that information from StatsCan for the national level. If you want the provincial level then it costs a little more. If you want the detailed municipal level, it costs a lot. But when you're buying the municipal level, you have to buy all of it for the entire country. Small firms are only looking for their particular region, whether it's Arnprior or Renfrew or perhaps some of those other areas. To a large degree, you cannot purchase the information or get the information for one specific area. You may have to get the entire country at that specific point. So to the degree that you can get that information...

Thank you.

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Okay.

I'd like Mr. Pineau to answer.

**Mr. John Pineau:** I think what happens a lot of the time is so much of the data that's required in the forest sector comes as a result of the relationships between, say, industry and the provincial governments. I think there's generally a pretty good dialogue there, and identification of what the needs are and what needs to be worked on, particularly with things like forest inventory, or base-map data, what will tell you what's on the land, what the terrain is.

In terms of the federal level, I think there are some really good cooperative models that I alluded to earlier, like FPInnovations, Canadian Wood Fibre Centre, Canadian Forest Service, where partners from industry, from the provincial governments, from academia, work within those organizations to identify what's needed and what would help the sector in general. Again, the only issue there is some folks who don't directly pay dues or get directly involved or put some money on the table might be excluded, and that could include the entrepreneurs. In general, there's a good, from the bottom-up, feeding of the needs of data and information to these greater organizations.

• (0950)

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Do I still have time or not?

**The Chair:** Thirty seconds.

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** We've been told that the government doesn't advertise, that they just go out and do their thing. What do you think of the idea of them advertising that they actually have sites that provide all this data so people in general would know about it?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** I'd walk before running on that front. I think getting information out to the intermediaries and small-business associations like ours and others would be a good start to a degree, and then monitor usage and see if it goes up significantly. We've only got a couple of years of details about CANSIM, for example, but I'd wait and see. Let's deal with the data first, as opposed to the advertising.

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Pineau.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Mr. Pineau, please give a brief answer.

[English]

**Mr. John Pineau:** I would agree with that. Build the sets up first, make sure that you get something pretty decent to market—and I think you're getting there—and then look at that.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Ms. Day, you have five minutes.

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to come back to the issue of transparency.

One of the priorities in the context of open data in Canada was to increase transparency and accountability, and to stimulate innovation and economic growth across the country.

In order to achieve that goal, what sort of conditions are needed in your respective fields?

[English]

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** Are you directing that to me?

**Mr. John Pineau:** Go ahead first.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** Is my question clear?

[English]

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Who are you asking?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** I can clarify.

[English]

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** I'm not quite sure what the question was.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** In your opinion, what needs to be done to ensure that the open data that we want to promote will better serve your communities and your entrepreneurs?

Mr. Mallett, you listed a number of things. You said that the value of the databases should depend on how it is used. We therefore need to increase the number of users. You also said that we need to find ways to identify all data and microdata.

In your respective fields, what elements could be beneficial for open data?

[English]

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** Let's see some of the additional movements in making this available, once we see more specific information that we think has more currency within the small-business sector. We are certainly letting people know. For example, Industry Canada data benchmarking is something we've been promoting with our particular members along those lines. So when we see more of this information coming out, we'll make sure that we can promote it within our particular sector and perhaps we can move forward.

In terms of accountability and transparency, those are all valuable goals for accountability and so on, but it's not top and centre of the specific information members are looking for. Small businesses are looking for information that particularly helps them make better decisions. It's not so much a government accountability issue, although we understand that's a very important element to the whole open data principle.

**Mr. John Pineau:** From my perspective, I think it's bringing disparate datasets together from across the country, if there were some really effective way to do that. There's a lot going on out there. There is a lot going on in the provinces and the territories, and it's not just in terms of industry or development. It's in terms of protection and basically setting aside land for more natural purposes, more recreation.

I think if we had a better handle on the overall level of business activity in the forest sector in Canada and could roll that up more easily—and I'm not sure how we'd do that. Again, there are bodies that could possibly do that, and have a better idea overall of how much natural area there is. I know we have statistics on it, but something that kind of shows there is a balance and there is a sustainability factor across the country would be ideal with regard to bringing data together and making it openly accessible.

Again, I'd say the social licence and bringing about the confidence that the forest sector is sustainable, that would be an ideal sort of situation to me. It's not easy to do, though, because there are so many players, and it generally is the jurisdiction of the provinces.

• (0955)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Ms. Day, you have a few seconds left.

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day:** My question is for Mr. Pineau.

We know that some grains are genetically modified and that this has a huge impact. We also know that bees are dying. Our province has a lot of apple trees and apple products. The agricultural industry is very strong in this area.

Do you think that all these data should be posted on the government website in order to inform farmers?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Day.

Mr. Pineau, you have a few seconds left to answer the question.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Pineau:** I think the more openly accessible the data is, the better. I generally feel that way. That's what promotes knowledge and understanding. It's the best scenario to me.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Adler, you have the floor for five minutes.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC):** Thank you very much, Chair.

Gentlemen, thank you very much for being here this morning.

I do want to first of all begin with a question to Mr. Mallett. We're all aware of the CFIB and the wonderful work you do to represent small and medium-sized businesses here in Canada.

Could you please tell me roughly how many members CFIB has currently?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** It has 39,000 business members across the country.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** How do you go about collecting the data on these businesses?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** There are two ways. One is our district representatives, who are based all across the country and have their own predefined territories, collect information face to face with business owners when they renew their memberships, or when they are bumping into them in their own local areas.

But we also extensively use surveys to collect information about their operating conditions, their preferences for policies, and so on and so forth. So we have developed quite a sophisticated survey arm within CFIB to collect this information.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** And the efficacy and response rate of these surveys, and the data collections that are done by the regional supervisors, would you say are sound? There's a good representative sample and you're getting adequate information?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** Yes. We check very closely to what degree we can, with external datasets about the representativeness of the information. You might have seen our business barometer survey, which is sent out to a different group of members every month, and we get very consistent results back. So in terms of the statistical variance we get in these samples, they tend to be within the bounds of the private sector market research industry in that respect.

We do publish those kinds of bounds of confidence as well, and we take it very seriously to make sure our information is as representative as possible.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** I know you do. I know you do a very good job at it, too.

So in essence you're kind of like a data broker for all of your members. Is that data available to your membership, or is some held back?

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** Yes. They can access that information. We push that survey data back out to them to the degree they want. We make this available freely. We have never put a price on this information. It's always available to those free of charge. We have made datasets available to other analysts, whether it's the academic community... The Bank of Canada looks at our information in specific raw form as well. We have shared it with lots of government departments at all levels in the past.

This is really what we're supposed to be doing. We want to promote the understanding of the small-business sector and how it operates to policy-makers, and information is one of the ways we do that.

● (1000)

**Mr. Mark Adler:** Yes, I know. Certainly, as I said earlier, you do a very good job at it too, and you're able to present to policy-makers very sound information that we certainly use in the development of good, sound public policy.

Mr. Pineau, I would ask you pretty much the same question. How many members in your group?

**Mr. John Pineau:** We have about 2,800 individual members, and then there are probably about 50 or 60 what we call sustaining corporate members.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** How do you go about reaching out to your membership to collect data?

**Mr. John Pineau:** In essence for our membership, it's their personal information: who they work for, what university or college they graduated from, what forestry program, and where they are currently employed, that sort of thing. It's whatever is important to us in terms of tracking.

Then for the sustaining membership, it's the same sort of thing but on a corporate level. That's all private and proprietary, though. We don't share it generally.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** Of course not. No one would expect that you would.

In terms of the specific sort of business data, do you go about collecting that from the membership too, or is this something you just do separately as an industry association?

**Mr. John Pineau:** Yes. We're separate as an association. Our business isn't business per se, but it's the business our members engage in that we're interested in, the data they use, and that's really what I've been talking about today: them as individuals working in government, industry, academia, or another non-profit, and the sustaining memberships, and they are often government, industry, or academia as well.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** You mentioned earlier that we have a good forestry product to offer the world. We certainly do.

When the world comes to us as a customer and you're offering that product—which is certainly world-class, one of the best in the world—you mentioned earlier that customers need to know that sound research was behind the development of that product.

How do you go about obtaining that sound research to offer that superior product and be able to make that claim, which is true because I'm not doubting the claim.

**Mr. John Pineau:** It's whoever wants to do the science and research.

That's the beauty of Canada, in that we do have very strong academic institutions that are doing the non-applied sort of science and research. Then you've got companies that get involved and engaged and will actually put some money on the table to help get more applied research done, answer the specific questions they need to do business better, and then the government regulators... It's hit and miss.

Some provinces have curtailed their research and science programs. I think it's to the detriment of the situation. Again, they have their unique perspective as regulators on managing forests for all values, for all Canadians. You get that mix and it's pretty powerful. It can answer those questions, produce the data that we need to inspire pride and confidence in Canadian forestry. That's what we want our customers around the world to know, that we're sustainable and it's all based on that science from all different sources. That's where our members are spread out.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Byrne now.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you, Chair.

We've spoken about this in the committee with other witnesses who've made the case that this has potential to go beyond the realm of just governments supplying data. It could also go to civil society to be able to input and add to the collection, the wealth of information that could be on open data portals. We've also discussed at length some of the privacy concerns that could flow from micro-data. Mr. Mallet, you raised those as well.

There is an element to this that may be inconvenient but perhaps should be out in the public domain.

For example, with the food service industry, health inspections become of paramount importance. It could either lead to very good or very bad publicity. It is an analysis that's done in a very transparent and a very process-based way that leads to a conclusion.

The CFIB posts a lot of information and harvest data from its own membership.

Do you suspect, or would you suggest to us, that there may be some concerns that could flow from that kind of information also being exposed on the portal?

•(1005)

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** No matter what the information is, if you're naming a particular individual or a particular business, there's a

challenge. One has to look very carefully in terms of how that information is put up and perhaps interpreted, particularly if you're talking about inspections or failed inspections or penalties imposed. That can have a big impact on businesses and that in itself, publishing names, has a proactive effect on future behaviour.

I think it's important to tread very carefully in that particular area. From our standpoint, most of my discussion notes have really talked about broad-based information that's available on essentially an anonymous basis, that you can get information that's based on an agglomeration of a particular number of businesses or consumers.

If you wanted to get more specific then I think you'd have to look very carefully, and probably involve the industry-specific associations, and so on, in dealing with it that way.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Do you have anything to add to that, or was it more directed from a business, an entrepreneurial point of view?

**Mr. John Pineau:** I won't add anything.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Mr. Chair, I think that concludes my questions.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Trottier, the floor is yours.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just had some follow-up questions for Mr. Pineau about relevant data that the government could provide. I'm not sure if government is the right player.

I think about your industry, where you're always chasing demand and it's always a challenge in terms of managing capacity and things like housing starts or newsprint exports to the United States or other kinds of things that would give your members an indication of what the demand is looking like and help them to be able to plan their businesses.

Are there things that you can think of where the government would have that data and then should be providing that data to your members?

**Mr. John Pineau:** I admit to not knowing a lot about that aspect of things. But certainly long-term trends in something like the purchase of pulp and paper, or certainly trends in terms of, say, the biofuel and the bioeconomy, where you can see the growing demand of the European markets, for instance.... I think that's something our industry members and the government members are very cognizant of. Any data along those lines can certainly help to gear the business up or to identify new possible products.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** I'm not even sure how "micro" the Government of Canada might get. For example, would it look at sales of two-by-four-by-eight studs to the United States and be able to provide that information to its members so that they could see the swings in demand? Or is it more getting information directly from the source of demand, from the United States or from Europe, and providing that information to your members?

**Mr. John Pineau:** It's a good example. I think the softwood lumber dispute, or agreement, depending on how you look at it, and what you want to call it, helped us to really understand what the volume of sales was to the U.S., for instance. Again, those sorts of statistics, if provided by the government.... I know an individual company can certainly determine what its sales are, and its volumes, and that sort of thing—the capacity—but if it could be rolled up again into something that generally gives them an idea of the trends over the long term and the overall sales of Canadian forest products, of all companies, that can help with business decisions, for sure.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Okay.

Those are all my questions, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Trottier.

This brings us to the end of our testimony today.

I wish to thank our two witnesses, Mr. Pineau and Mr. Mallett.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ted Mallett:** It's my pleasure. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

A small change needs to be made to our calendar.

For our study on open data, the President of the Treasury Board will appear on Monday, May 5 instead of Monday, April 28. So, there is a small change regarding when the President of the Treasury Board will appear. He will appear before the committee on Monday, May 5 at 3:30 p.m.

Please note that there will be a committee meeting on Tuesday, April 29.

With that, I would like to thank once again all committee members and the witnesses.

The meeting is adjourned until Thursday.

Thank you and have a good day.

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