



Sustainable Forest Management in Canada

Key Facts

Canada's sustainable forest management practices are internationally recognized as among the most rigorous in the world.

- Canada is a forest nation. Our **348 million hectares of forest lands** represent about **9%** of the world's forest cover but account for only **0.3%** of global deforestation.
- Canada has **161 million hectares of forest land** that is **independently certified as sustainably managed**. That's **43%** of the world's certified forests — far more than any other country in the world.
- In contrast, the United States is a distant second with only 41 million hectares of forest land independently certified — which is approximately 11% of the world's certified forests.
- Third-party certification **promotes sustainable forest management** through criteria such as biodiversity, wildlife habitat, soils, Aboriginal consultation and water quality analysis.

Canada is a world leader in forest science.

- Canadian forest practices are based on **sound science** that considers the **long-term sustainability** of forest ecosystems.
- Canadian government scientists are actively building the knowledge base required for Canada to remain a world leader in sustainable forest practices.

Canada's rate of deforestation is virtually zero and has remained at this level for more than two decades.

- Deforestation is the clearing of forests to make way for new, non-forest land uses. Canada's rate of deforestation has averaged 0.02% annually for more than two decades.
- The **annual harvest** in Canada makes up **less than 0.5%** of total forest area, and **all forests harvested on public lands must be regenerated**. In contrast, **6%** of Canada's forests are damaged by **insects** each year, and **1%** is burned in **forest fires**.

Canada's boreal forest has long been central to our natural environment, history, culture and economy.

- Canada uses many conservation measures to protect its **boreal forests**, including integrated land-use planning, environmentally sound forest management, and species and habitat recovery. **Only 0.2% of Canada's boreal forests are harvested each year.**
- The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA) – the world's largest conservation agreement – was established in 2010 and sets a global precedent for cooperation. CBFA partners work together to negotiate a balance between forest sector prosperity and conservation directly involving 73 million hectares of boreal forest, or one-third of Canada's managed forest land.



Canada is transparent and accountable regarding its sustainability practices.

- The Government of Canada reports annually to Parliament through *The State of Canada's Forests*. For 25 years, this legislated report has demonstrated that the Government of Canada values the economic, social and environmental status of forests and forestry in Canada.
- Canada is constantly monitoring and adapting its **sustainable forest management practices** based on many science-based sustainability indicators. These indicators include regeneration, forest disturbances, carbon emissions, and area and volume harvested, among others. They give government, industry, researchers and the public a way to define, assess and monitor our progress.

Canada's leadership in forest management extends far beyond its borders.

- In 1994, Canada was a **founding member of the Montréal Process**, an initiative dedicated to the sustainable development of the world's temperate and boreal forests.
- Canada led the way in developing the International Model Forest Network – a global network of 60 model forests in 30 countries on five continents. This initiative has increased knowledge of natural resource management and demonstrated the on-the-ground application of the principles of sustainable development.

Canada is committed to working with Aboriginal communities and upholding Aboriginal rights.

- Canada's constitution requires the strong protection of Aboriginal rights. Canada actively engages with Aboriginal peoples in resource development decisions affecting their land and communities.
- Canada upholds our constitutional responsibility to work closely with Aboriginal communities to develop the forest sector responsibly and support economic development.
- The forest sector is one of the top employers of Aboriginal people in Canada.



Canada's Forest Practices – What Others Are Saying

Leger Research Intelligence Group – Analysis of Market Acceptance Issues (2014)

"As a supplier of forest products, Canada is perceived as the best forest products supplier in terms of environmental practices and reputation."

Conference Board of Canada – How does Canada's intensity of use of forest resources compare with that of other countries? (2013)

"Canada has received an 'A' grade for its intensity of use of forest resources. This ranking means that the amount of trees Canada harvests is well below our large volume of forested land. In fact, more than 70% of Canada's forested area has never been harvested."

"Canada has the world's largest area of forest certified to third-party sustainable forest certification. The area of forests certified in Canada has steadily increased in recent years."

United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization – State of the World's Forests report (2007)

"Canada's rate of deforestation is virtually zero and has been for over two decades."

Dr. Ben Cashore, Yale University – How Canada Compares (2004)

"The regime of forest management and conservation in Canada is, in the aggregate, one of the most advanced in the world."

"In a comparison of forest policy and regulations across 38 jurisdictions around the world, when it comes to a range of measures including streamside management and reforestation policy, Canada is undeniably among the world's most environmentally progressive producers".