

## **Peer Review and Invited Guests Panel**

**Christian Messier, Peter Duinker, Neil Bird, and Cliff Hickey**

**Roberta Benefiel:** Just one question, the 200 thousand that Len Moores mentioned is that for the whole province or is that specific for Labrador.

**Len Moores:** Labrador

**Peter Duinker:** How many management units is that spread over then?

**Len Moores:** District 19.

**Peter Duinker:** District 19. It is starting to look a little better isn't it especially since that could be used to leverage others.

**Christian Messier:** Just maybe a comment here. I do believe 50,000 metres is actually quiet below the maximum. If there is no worry that this will be exceeded or even reached maybe there is no hurry to try to get a better estimate of the yield because there is no worry there. What I understand is that the priority of this plan was not on the timber but it was on the social aspect, the ecological aspect, the biodiversity – and I think you have put a lot of emphasis convincing us, and I think we felt convinced that 50% will be protected and that will be great. I am still a bit concerned that we may not have put enough emphasis or research into making sure that we are protecting the right place, the right amount, in the right way. If this is very important maybe there should be some research done there. I agree with Peter, we have to prioritize – we cannot do research on all aspects. For biodiversity I think we are fairly in the dark there and probably need more research.

**Jim Taylor:** Peter, could we get you to expand a little bit more on what you were talking about at the end of your presentation in talking about managing for other things other than wood fibre – maybe we should be managing for a defined age class structure and by the way have some available for wood supply. Could you expand a little bit on that thought?

**Peter Duinker:** I have followed the normal approaches to wood supply analysis and forest inventory projections, most of the traditional models that we have had from the late 70's through to the 90's allowed people to set targets for wood supply initially and then to run the models to see if we could get the wood supply you wanted. By the way, you check the age class structure that would emerge from that and see if that is a good or bad age class structure. If you flip that around and we have got some models now that are available with which you could go entirely in reverse and say I want a target age class distribution which maybe as much ecologically driven as well as wood supply – I mean, Christian talked about that even age class distribution over 100 years the perfect normal forest that we have essentially abandoned now as any kind of model where ecology is driving the agenda. So, we could actually instead of saying I want to get 100,000 cubic metres per year – I want this target age class structure. What will it take in combination with allowing some natural disturbances to continue to take place and timber harvest to generate that. Certainly, what you wouldn't want from an economic perspective is 500,000 cubic metres cut this year and none for the next nine years because an economy cannot operate very smoothly on that basis. When you switch it around the exploration can put the ecological domains as the objectives up front rather than the timber supply objectives up front

where you see what you get on the ecological domain. The models are available to do that as I understand. I don't know if I could put it on a jurisdictional platform, but I think some companies (fibre) are exploring that approach in various jurisdictions across Canada. They may be constrained by the jurisdictional situation within which they sit.

**Guy Playfair:** Listening to what we expect will come to Labrador, I guess we are beginning to embark on a lot of research in this area with all kinds of different groups involved. I think we need to find a way to inform the public and inform each other in terms of a newsletter or some kind of thread based discussion group on a computer – something based in Labrador. While I work as a forest technician here, I am usually squeaking away. The common view that I find and I think technical personnel are encouraged to take more of an initiative to participate in some of the higher level or more complicated discussions – this is how we learn. I think a lot of people at the technical level feel that everything is out of reach – funding, networks, organizations, wheels of industry. I work in forestry and I don't know how the local public feels, but I think often times they are in the dark. I don't know how many organizations we have in this room. I think it would be a good thing to help to look at the opportunities to learn. I think that would be something the public could take to inform them on the research. This is something that could be achieved very cheaply. Since this forest is in Labrador, it will be important to let the people of Labrador know who is who. If you are going to do research here, you have to follow Innu Nation's research protocols. I think through an informative newsletter or something like that could be really beneficial. Who would want to handle that – it could be handled by DFRA or Innu Nation or Model Forest – I think it is really important.

**Peter Duinker:** In response to that, you have great opportunity here to prevent this plan from being a well-kept secret. I don't know how well kept the secret is around here, but I was on a plane with a well-educated young mother on the way from St. John's who has lived here for two years. Just before we landed I thought I would ask her what she thought about the new forest management plan for district 19 – and she smiled at me, didn't know a thing. So if there is a person who is probably following the news and doesn't know a thing about what is going on here, we have got a job or you have a job to do.

**Jim Taylor:** Another cultural group that we haven't talked about at all, there is one group that we have seemed to have missed entirely, and I am not talking about Metis, I am talking our youth. We have seemed to have missed that all together. I am starting to wonder now if I had my time back and was starting all over again a few years back whether I should have spent more time thinking about the youth and how we could be engaging them; particularly up here in this kind of situation where we have different cultures. Wouldn't it be wonderful to wind the clock back a little bit and somehow engage the youth and get them appreciating and respecting our different cultures. It just kind of strikes me now perhaps that should be in our plan, how do we communicate to them, how do you develop new plans and get them involved with this stuff. It is only a comment that I just wanted to throw it towards Cliff. Is there anything there that you have seen across the country that might help?

**Cliff Hickey:** I am just trying to remember some statistics here and that is why I am an anthropologist – I am not good with numbers. It was about new forestry graduates and people, and not just professional foresters but people working in the forests industry one way or another. The statistics between the general population and aboriginal youth going into the forest industry one way or another is quiet amazing. Aboriginal youth are in something like 10 x or 8 x more

per capita than the general population. What we are seeing is a decline from the general populations involvement in the forest industry and a very steep incline in the aboriginal population. We have discussed what that might mean, but it is just kind of an interesting thing. If the future of an industry is its youth, there is something pretty profound happening out there. Of course, most of those aboriginal communities are forest communities – 80% of the aboriginal people in this country live in the forests. Something is happening in terms of their involvement and again it is profound, again I could not believe it when I heard that. The shift is that important.

Now there are other ways to involve youth. I would much prefer to have some local input into what we have put in there rather than tell you something. I was just wondering if it might be helpful if we talked a little bit about the sustainable forest management network. It is the recognition by the federal government and then by many provincial governments, industry, and First Nations that the future of our forests is really important to this country. So as important as it is to Labrador, it is a reflection on one small scale and a concern right across the country. It is our job basically to promote the concept of sustainability and to find ways to make it real at every level. What you are asking when you are asking us to become involved is to make those connections across the country. As advanced as the Labrador district 19A plan is, you are going to get to share that and see what other people are doing. I think you will be surprised once you realize how far ahead of where the international community largely is in terms of forest and forest management and issues within forest. Labrador is very cosmopolitan in that way compared to most of the rest of Canada – so I congratulate you on that.

**Martin Von Mirbach:** Further to Peter's comments both this morning and just now, maybe Christian would be best to answer, it deals with both the need to having worked with indicators for a while I appreciate Peter's warning that we need to trim our wish list of indicators down to a manageable set and that it is fine to accept an indicator as valid but it may not necessarily be cost effective in terms of getting rich information that will be really helpful with management decisions. I also think that this may be a question about a fine filtered versus a coarse filtered approach. I find that songbird biologists will say doing songbird surveys is a great way to indicate forest health, and lichen researchers will say the same for lichen relationships. Essentially, we can get lost and 200k will disappear fairly quickly down those hatches. The attempt has always been for forest managers, and I am sympathetic to that because I think that some of those researchers are doing some terrific research, that you want to have it grounded in managing the forest structure in its broad sense. Essentially I am getting to Peter's recent comments – what if you managed the age class composition and structure of the forest and simply, you kind of hope that if you do that then your songbirds will do okay and your lichen will do okay and your important game animals will also do okay. My question is, do we feel confident that you have the data to be able to manage the structure of Labrador's forests in a coarse approximation has at least a reasonable chance of meeting those other local forest concerns.

**Christian Messier:** I will make a comment, and I am not sure if I am answering your question, and I will probably make another outrageous comment. As a researcher, I feel that most of the research that I have done has never been implemented. Most of the people who are managing the forests are not interested in implementing the research because they don't like the results, not totally, but to a big extent. Some people will argue that because you didn't work closely enough with the managers to give them what they really want – maybe that is right. In most cases, and

this is changing a little bit and again the SFMN has had some impact and some of the people there are a bit more open minded, but even in Alberta when you talk to the forest companies they are very interested in variable retention and knowing how much trees they should leave but they tell you very quickly above 6% they cannot leave any more. I mean, if you do the research and you say this is 30% that you need to leave – they don't like what you do and they won't implement it. All of that to say, it seems to me that what I really like here is that you are very open minded about doing the best and you don't have the constraints that I see everywhere that we lack wood and every research which shows we should cut less would but we don't like it. I think that because of that, you have an unique opportunity to really go and work together, and that is why I like the adaptive management in developing a conceptual model first then maybe a real model, and then we will see by doing some simulation and scenarios what are the most sensitive issues and where should we actually allocate the funding. Maybe it is too early now to make a wish list. There is a lot of good wisdom that could be put into a model and they will get fairly good results. We don't need a lot of new research to know that protected areas are useful, and we know a lot about birds and what they require. There are a lot of things we know, and I think that by doing an exercise, like was attempted in the 60's and 70's by Walters group you put a bunch of experts together, what are the questions, what are the objectives, and you develop a model and then you find out what are the important research questions. Maybe it is a bit extremist, but you know a lot of the research that we do is not being implemented. I have been complaining about this in Quebec for the last five years and the SFMN hear me all of the time complaining about this. I even challenged a forest company at a meeting of the SFMN to stop complaining we are not doing the research you want because you don't care about what we do because you don't implement it. Of course, if there is research that shows that you increase the yield then they like it and they implement it.

**Peter Duinker:** I think the forest sector community knows extremely well how to get a handle on forest structure and composition including the age classes. I mean we have the remote sensing protocols down pretty well, temporary sample plots and permanent plots and networks and so on are well established and the most recent versions of them have nice protocols for getting ecological data as well as just the tree story and so. I don't think it would be difficult at all for some experts to get their heads together and cost that out for this forest very precisely. How much of the limited research budget that would take up, I am not sure. Maybe, it would be the right way to take all of the institutional money that is already allocated and put it all to that and see what else you get when the researchers take some interest and bring their personal agendas to this forest at the same time.

**Louis LaPierre:** Mine are mostly comments. First of all I hear someone saying 200k is a lot of money. I can assure you that 200k is a drop in the bucket. We run a research program of over a million dollars. There are no roads so if you want to study lichen you take a helicopter at \$1,000 a pop so it is very expensive. One project can eat up 200k. I suggest that you need to be very cautious as to how you are going to spend your 200k. I think that a lot of work has already been done. For example, most of the work of the Institute has done over the last seven years – a lot of it can be extrapolated into forestry work. I think what you need to do is take a good look at who is doing what and you will find that a lot of the work has already been done and you have a lot of information to start with. I think that is where I would start rather than initiating new projects.

The other one is sharing of information. Certainly sharing information is important. At the Institute we do have our web site and those of you who want to know what we are doing you can

tune in; but we also produce a newsletter, and I am sure there would be no problem to add your names to our newsletter distribution list if you want to know what we are doing. So, let Maureen know if you want your name added to the list.

I think the comment on sharing the information in the communities is very important. I know from my time in Labrador that news doesn't get spread around in Labrador like it does in the rest of Canada. What happens is we spend a lot of time at the Institute in a community program in which we have an individual who travels to the communities to share the information on what we do at the Institute, and she gathers from the communities the questions and concerns that they have and we try to implement those into the research program and also integrate the concerns that we have into the information that we put together. I think that it is very important that people know and understand what you are doing. I think you need to assess the tools and ways of doing it. It is a bit different than doing it in Ottawa.

So, my last comment is that at the Institute we would certainly will be willing to share the information that we have and to have the people from the forestry sector sit on our technical committees. We do have very good technical committees which look at wildlife and we work quite closely with the people from Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec.

**Helen Andrew:** I would like to comment that this is our homeland, my homeland. I do not look at this as real estate, and I do not teach my children to look at it as real estate. My question is how come the Innu Elders are not speaking and giving the expert opinions. What do they think about what is happening today and the forest management plan? Could we hear this before maybe they go home? That is what I want to ask the Innu Elders.

**Jim Taylor:** Excellent question.

**Neil Faulkner:** My name is Neil Faulkner, and I am a short term resident up in North West River. I commend holding a workshop like this bringing the researchers, the public, the Innu, and others who are interested – an excellent idea. My concerns are that an enormous amount of research is clearly required and it is all geared to saving the goose that hopefully lays the golden egg, so it is obviously a good place to have it in Goose Bay. I tend to agree that a lot of money can be spent on research but what I sense from the short time I have been here is the fact that when you are addressing this the logs are still going out and the logs are cut up for fibre and the real value of the forest remains somewhat unknown. My question is, you are zeroing in on the sustainability aspect, the biodiversity – excellent stuff and it has to be done. A lot of it is long term and you are not going to get results in the short term and you don't have a huge resource base. When you get to the point of your objective here about opportunities for the sustainable development of forestry plus the fact that in Labrador here, where there is considerable concern about the future economy, there is an enormous number of young people who need to have jobs that they feel really good about and respected – there seems to be a disconnect here. I realize that economic opportunities aren't always the concern, identifying the value of the forest is the concern. But how do we build the bridges to enable Labrador to capture the benefits, to identify what lays there sustainable from this. There are 101 questions about how to do that and too often they look at the past disasters. My concern is how do we do forestry with a good climate to engage in what the real issues are about which is sustaining the forest as a means to assist in the productive livelihood in the neighbourhood. What mechanisms are required? How do you respond to that?

**Cliff Hickey:** Clearly there is huge potential for jobs in the aboriginal community. I know about tension between the Island and Labrador about things like jobs and value added. At one point I was going to ask Neil here when he was talking about carbon credits and industry whether for example if he could retain more carbon credits by having value added mills rather than just shipping out round logs or even rough lumber. Those are the kinds of things that I think that a provincial or a sub-provincial jurisdiction needs to get its teeth into to come up with a regional plan that involves economic resources, it involves education, capacity building, and all of these kinds of things; and that is not really my area of expertise. I think that this is the kind of thing that the entire Labrador community needs to address. I cannot tell you what to do; I am one of those fly in and fly out types. I can do a job if you can identify what the job is, but this is a matter of political will; and if you guys can come together in the way you have on this sort of a plan it seems to me that you could come together on this sort of an issue.

**Christian Messier:** I just have another perspective here. I agree totally that people need good jobs, rewarding jobs, and we need better education. The more the people have good jobs and good education, the more they will be more aware or more willing to protect the environment. Someone gave me this example when I was in Finland, and I have been pondering about this and I will share it with you and you can ponder about this. In the 1920's Finland was a poor country before the war they were farmers, so the country developed their forestry and put a lot of energy into developing the best most intensive forestry for that part of the world. They created wealth and from this wealth they developed a lot of industry, they have a good shipping industry and they produce all of these pulp and paper machines and now forestry has become less important. So much so that they are trying to protect some of these areas because all of the forests have been managed for economic purposes. We can see if this is a good strategy. Let's take all of the productive land of Newfoundland and let's produce lots of timber and make everybody wealthy and the kids will be educated and create industry and they will protect the forests. It could work. You will have to wait to see how you can develop an area. I am not sure if this is the way you want to go. It is probably not what I would propose. I still believe that we should try to extract timber from this forest and see how much we can extract without affecting biodiversity and the traditional way of life. I am a believer that forestry could be a renewable resource and could bring a lot of wealth. I don't want to dismiss the fact that we should invest energy and effort in trying to find out how much timber. We should maximize not just quantity but quality to get high value. Some people have told me that this old growing black spruce could be very valuable for making some very nice music instruments because of the density of the wood and maybe this is something that should be developed, I don't know. I hope I did not confuse you too much. I am aware that people need jobs and forestry could supply jobs, but we also want to protect biodiversity and the traditional way of life.

**Roberta Benefiel:** This actually goes back to what are the benefits and what we need to know in order to develop a local sustainable forest economy. This is a paper that was drawn up by a group called the 3rd signatory and a couple of our members are here. This is the kind of research that we are interested in seeing happening. I am just going to kind of read down through them:

How to optimize and capture the local forestry benefits and what will be required to achieve those targets?

What studies are planned?

What are the harvesting options – mechanical, clear cut, selective?

I have pages and pages on the local economy, local benefits. What is a sustainable forest plan and how do we invest in the local economy. These are some of our research questions.

**Jim Taylor:** Can you leave that with us?

**Roberta Benefiel:** In a better form we will put it together.

*Please note draft of this paper is attached to these documents.*

**Cliff Hickey:** That is really helpful and that is what we want to hear. Again, what you have just said and what Neil just said is another reason that I see so many similarities between Labrador and the Yukon. We have got exactly the same concerns in the Yukon because all of these companies based in BC are coming in cutting the Yukon forest and where are the jobs going – down to BC. It is so similar again that it is just so frustrating that we cannot work together so I am hoping that we can deal with some of these issues. All of those topics that you mentioned, they are all possible.

**Christian Messier:** Just a quick comment here, and I think that my colleague (cannot hear name) may not be happy. According to him there is no future in pulp and paper in Canada and there is too much competition from fast growing trees elsewhere so I think that our slow growing trees that we should try to find other purposes for it; maybe purposes that are unique in the world so that we develop a unique market for them. I don't know what they are, and I like your concerns on what should we do with this timber which is unique that will bring the most value to the people. Maybe pulp and paper is not the best strategy.

**Guy Playfair:** I just have a quick comment. I would like to try to bridge a gap between some of the things that Roberta was saying and before the Innu Elders speak. One of our jobs as forest guardians in cooperation with the Department of Forestry is to communicate to some of the Elders and to communicate what the Elders say about forest operations and what we see. Some of the answers are hard to find. The question that some of the people in our community ask us “Why are they doing this?” “Why are they cutting the trees down?” “Why do they need to cut this much wood?” It makes me think about what is the carrying capacity of this land in terms of the native people. I come from that perspective because that is who I work for, so what I talk about is not necessarily anti-industry but it is a question. If all of the stores and coops in Goose Bay closed today, the Innu would still survive they have a reason to be here. I think this idea of carrying capacity extends to all of those who live in Labrador and some thought needs to be given on how much is this resource worth, how important is it, and what kind of stake do we want in it? The Innu have communicated very clearly what the state they want their resources in, they want enough animals to continue to eat. I will leave it at that. I am sure the Elders have something to say. Before we talk too much about timber sustainability, there is a very real dimension of human sustainability in FMD 19a.

**Peter Duinker:** I want to urge you to feel very optimistic and very cautious at the same time. I am on the Board of Trustees of a small foundation that is looking at funding something called the Komi Model Forest Project north east of Moscow. I visited that model forest back in May and was shocked at the disgusting conditions; ecological, socially, and economically. You guys are talking about harvesting 50,000 cubic metres a year here and I presume that is a ramp up from

what has been harvested here and you are in a very good condition to do it right. After 50 years of terrible exploitation of this forest north east of Moscow, things are in bad shape. The harvest levels at now about 30% of what is calculated to be long term sustainable in which they had until 1989-1990 when the Soviet Union fell apart. We went to visit a sawmill that was putting together 35,000 cubic metres a year. By Canadian standards that is pretty small. When I asked the owner of the mill how many people he had on payroll, it is 160. If you could to a modern mill somewhere in North America or Western Europe maybe 30 people or fewer would run a sawmill like that. He was very unsure how he was going to meet payroll month to month. Here I think we should feel very optimistic when you look at the situation some people are in a forest dependent economy.

**Cliff Hickey:** I think you are in a good situation today because I think whether it is conscious understanding or not, you arrived at some decision that indicate that you know that sustainability and managing resources is about managing people. That is the choke point – and you have already have adopted a plan here that shows that those people values and cultural ones and commitment to ecological diversity and biodiversity as well as last in line, economic sustainability, is the way to go. There are too many other parts of this world where that realization just isn't there, and that is what we are working towards.