

**Merritt Timber Supply Area  
Sustainable Forest Management Plan**

**Meeting Summary  
SFM Advisory Group Meeting, April 2, 2009**

	<i>SFM Advisory Group Member</i>	<i>Background/Affiliation/Location</i>
	Al Clarke	Radio NL Merritt
✓	Aline Lachapelle	Aspen Planers
✓	Andrea Inwards	Merritt Sunrise Rotary Club
✓	Barbara and Tom Hamilton	Allison Lake
	Bob Chambers	Ranching/ Woodlot, Merritt
✓	Brian Drobe	Weyerhaeuser (Princeton)
	Bruce Beech	Tolko
✓	Chris Lepsoe	Merritt
✓	Christian Guay	BCTS (Merritt)
✓	Dave Doubek	Stu'wix
	Dennis MacDonald	Stu'wix
	Elizabeth Salomon de Friedberg	Merritt
✓	Frank Armitage	Princeton
✓	Frank Etchart	Merritt
✓	Franz Reuter	Merritt
	Gerry Sanford	Merritt
	Ian Black	BCTS (Kamloops)
✓	Jan Stadey	ArdeW Wood Products
	Jenn Reid	BCTS (Merritt)
✓	Jerry Canuel	Aspen Planers
✓	Katharine Shewchuk	Merritt
	Ken Taylor	NVIT, Merritt
	Len Marsh	Cascades Forest District
	Lennard Joe	Nicola Tribal Association
	Leona Antoine	Merritt
	Lyle Leclair	Stu'wix
	Norm Hansen	Merritt
✓	Pat Salm	SFM Advisory Group Facilitator
	Paul Willms	NVIT, Merritt
✓	Rick Cooper	BCTS (Kamloops)
✓	Steve Borcsok	Upper Similkameen Indian Band
✓	Todd Chamberlain	ArdeW Wood Products
✓	Wayne Schindler	Woodlots/ Ranching, Merritt
	Wendy McKinney	Tolko

## 1. Introduction and Agenda Review

Meeting called to order shortly after 4:00 pm. New members, Barb and Tom Hamilton arrived early and spent time with Pat Salm to familiarize themselves with the SFM Plan and the advisory group process. All participants were welcomed to the meeting and members of the group were asked to introduce themselves. Pat stated that the main objective of the meeting would be to review action items and to discuss the 2008 Monitoring Report. He proceeded to review the agenda with the group. No further items were immediately added to the agenda.

## 2. Action Items from previous meeting

Pat briefly reviewed the action item (below) resulting from the previous meeting. Note: Action items are retained and brought forward at subsequent meetings until they are completed or the group feels they are no longer important.

*Bruce to advise of Tolko decision on whether to pursue a single advisory group for their Merritt and Kamloops operations.*

Bruce advised Pat earlier in the day that he would not be attending the meeting, but wanted the group to know that Tolko was not planning to pursue the option of having a single advisory group shared between their Kamloops (Heffley Creek) and Merritt Operations. Bruce wanted to thank the advisory group for their input in helping with this decision.

## 3. Review of 2008 Monitoring Report

Pat informed the group that the Monitoring Report summarized how licensees performed against the indicators in the 2008 SFM Plan between January and December 2008. He noted that all major licensees except Stu'wix and BCTS report on all 33 of the indicators. Stu'wix and BCTS report on 31 indicators because they do not have manufacturing facilities. In addition, the Small Scale Salvage Program reports on a smaller subset of the indicators, because many of the indicators are not applicable.

Pat reviewed Section 4 of the Monitoring Report (Highlights 2008) noting that the overall performance by licensees was very favorable and collectively, the best reporting performance in recent years. The Performance Summary tables on p.7 showed how the licensees were doing overall against the CSA criteria. In total, all indicator targets were met by all but one licensee who met all targets except for one – that of indicator 10 (explained below).

### *Indicator #10 Free Growing*

Harvested areas met free growing requirements on or before the late free growing date in 99.9% of cases. One seven hectare area (out of a total of 7509 hectares) did not meet the target for this indicator because it was surveyed after the late free growing date. Christian Guay explained to the group the block was surveyed 2 months after the late date, and the block was found to be free growing. The survey was completed within the same growing season as the late free growing date so it likely would have met the target had it been surveyed on time – the outage was more of an administrative issue.

The group reviewed a number of the specific indicators and targets that were of interest including indicators 2, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25 and 27. As a result of those discussions, a number of action items were generated:

*Indicator #20 Operating level of timber processing facilities*

Agreed to change the target, moving away from reporting on the average number of shifts worked per day to the total number of man hours that were worked. This reporting is to occur for the 2009 SFM Plan. This indicator remains not-applicable to BCTS and Stuwix (licensees without timber processing facilities). Thus the target for Indicator 20 in the 2009 SFM Plan will be revised as follows:

*Report number of timber processing facility operating days, the total number of man hours worked and the number of mill employees on payroll*

**Action: Pat to send out update to the 2009 SFM Plan**

There was considerable discussion pertaining to logging waste and residue and what is being done within the TSA to recover some of the waste materials. A recent report by Ben Parfitt was referenced (available at <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/reports/2009/03/woodwaste/>). On a related topic, there was also discussion on the amount of coarse woody debris that is being left behind following harvesting, and the need to retain some of this material for other values (such as trappers – indicated in the presentation to the PAG by Norm Druck). It was also noted that there is currently no indicator in the SFM Plan related to either of these. The group agreed with Jerry's suggestion that Aline explore information that we could add to the 2009 Monitoring Report providing an indication on what wood fibre is being utilized within the TSA. It was also agreed that no work be done on indicators related to either waste and residue or coarse woody debris until later in the year when indicators will be looked at as part of the CSA Standard revision.

**Action: Aline to review sources of information and suggest reporting data that could be added to the 2009 Monitoring Report that would provide an overview of how wood fibre is being utilized within the TSA.**

**Action: Pat to remind group of the desire to consider an indicator related to coarse woody debris and/or waste and residue when implementation of the revised Standard is underway.**

Advisory Group Evaluation Summary

The group reviewed trends of the Advisory Group Evaluation Summary (data from Indicator #35 found in Appendix 2). The survey is sent out to the public members of the group – it is not completed by the licensees. Overall the trending was favorable with just 5% of responses to individual questions indicating a less than satisfactory rating.

Additional input to Monitoring Report

Overall the group was happy with the Report format and the addition of indicating the 5 year trend where a graph was not used. Feedback from the Tolko audit suggested that the SFM Plan and Monitoring Report were heavy to text and quite technical. As a continual improvement item the group agreed that wherever possible results should be demonstrated with graphs/images as opposed to text.

**4. Review of Tolko Audit Findings and Company Audit Schedules for 2009**

Tolko sent out by email the QMI audit summary for their March 24-27, 2009 audit. While Tolko reps were not present at the meeting, the group did quickly review those items that were applicable to the advisory group. As noted previously the group has acted on one of the noted opportunities for improvement – the change to the target for indicator 20.

Other certified companies shared their audit schedule for the remainder of 2009. The schedule is planned as follows:

Ardew	1 <sup>st</sup> week of December
Aspen	October
BCTS	October 16-19
Weyerhaeuser	1 <sup>st</sup> week in November

## 5. Advisory Group Field Trip

Aspen Planers volunteered to host the field trip this year – timing to be confirmed by Jerry but looking at the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September. The emphasis of the field trip will be to look at current practices and opportunities related to wood fibre utilization, coarse woody debris retention and bioenergy.

## 6. Community Forest Management in Mexico – presentation by Franz Reuter

Franz provided the group with a very interesting presentation on his visit to a community forest in State of Oaxaca approximately 450 km southeast of Mexico City. The Ixtlán community forest is approximately 19,000 ha in size and owned by the community. This form of tenure (private ownership) provides the community with the security necessary to make investments in the forests and in manufacturing facilities that can utilize the wood fibre. Today, the community has the luxury of having no debt on its forestlands or the manufacturing facilities (sawmill, dry kilns and furniture factory). The community forest is certified to FSC and their certification has assisted them in securing financing for other projects and improving forest management.

Franz provided a handout of the presentation material to all those at the meeting. A copy of the presentation (without photos) has been appended to the meeting summary. Franz would love to get your feedback on the presentation – please contact him directly.

## 7. Current DFA issues, Other Business, Summary and Wrap up

### CSA Standard

Pat advised that the CSA standard (CAN/CSA Z809-08) has been finalized and published. You can download your copy from CSA's website (scroll down to the bottom of the page):

<http://www.shopcsa.ca/onlinestore/GetCatalogItemDetails.asp?mat=2419617>

Annex C (page 75) has summary information of key changes from the 02 version to this one. Pat also promised a 2 pager explaining the changes – it has been appended to the meeting summary following Franz's presentation. The advisory group will convene in the fall to discuss plans to incorporate the changes in the standard into our TSA SFM Plan.

### Timber Supply Review (TSR)

Brian advised that the data package for TSR 4 had been prepared and work is continuing in the preparation of the Analysis Report. The TSR is not expected to be completed prior to our completion of the 2010 Sustainable Forest Management Plan.

### Mountain Pine Beetle Uplift

Brian advised that additional licenses are being considered to award an additional 750,000 m<sup>3</sup> of beetle uplift volume by 2012. Licensees are engaged in the process; there is some concern on the economic and stewardship impacts with the award of this volume.

*Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.*

## Sustainable Community Forest Management in Mexico? Let's see...

F. Reuter, RPF, Merritt, B.C.

the present version is for Merritt TSA's PAC meeting on April 2-09

On a recent trip to Mexico, I wanted to see community forest management in action.

Mexico has 64.2 million ha of forests, which represent 33.7% of the land mass.

Knowing that over 80% of the forests of Mexico belong to rural communities, I wondered how they deal with sustainability issues, certification, wood utilization, biodiversity, conservation, unemployment, etc. A Mexican forester had suggested I go to the State of Oaxaca (wah-**hah**-kah), whose capital of the same name is situated 450 km southeast of Mexico City, a six hour non-stop bus ride. (see map of the Mexican Republic).

Oaxaca City was the first seat of the Forest Stewardship Council. The famous Tule tree (*Taxodium mucronatum*), apparently the largest tree in the world by volume is not far away (see picture below), as are the Zapotec ruins of Monte Albán, the more recent ruins of Mitla, and many mezcal factories (=local tequila) in the nearby valleys. Oaxaca City has a beautiful colonial town centre, parts of it now are a World Heritage Site.

### Ixtlán de Juárez

Ixtlán (pronounced "Istlan") lies about 60 km north of Oaxaca City. It is a small town of 2,700 people with an impressive colonial church (photo), situated at about 2,250 m elevation, below pine-oak forests in very rugged terrain.

I knew there was a small university outside of Ixtlán (photo) with a young forestry faculty. What I did not know was that Ixtlán is one of the most advanced forest management communities in all of Mexico. They practice sustainable forestry, operate a small industrial area which produces certified wood products from their large furniture factory attached to a modern sawmill. The nearby computerized nursery grows up to 500,000 pine seedlings for the community's own needs (only 20,000 per year), the rest being sold to other parts of Oaxaca State.

I was invited to spend two days with Ixtlán's forest engineer and his silviculture assistant. There are over 80 community forests in Oaxaca State alone at various stages of forest management - the technical staff is all local. Detailed forest management plans are drafted by consulting firms with local input. These plans are revised every ten years. Before any harvesting takes place, a detailed inventory is done and the area is laid out properly, with the corners GPS'ed and marked on topographic maps.

Ixtlán's "forest management community" has 384 members (*comuneros*). They are the owners of the natural resources and the local forestry-related businesses (see below). All of them, as well as "*non-comuneros*" of Ixtlán, are busy in one or the other aspects of forestry from nursery activities, to forest harvesting, a sawmill, furniture manufacturing, boundary monitoring and fire prevention. Incidentally, there are hardly any fires at all, which is surprising, considering the amount of fuel load in the forests and the long dry season. There are strict rules as to who can become a *comunero*, All of them have to reside permanently in Ixtlán.

The forest management community operates within the municipality of Ixtlán which is a government entity providing the normal essential services, such as health, education, water, garbage collection, collecting taxes, etc.

A few words about biodiversity, especially tree species:

Mexico has a greater variety of pine species than any other country and also the largest variety of oak species in the New World.

In the managed forests belonging to the Ixtlán community the most important pines are: *Pinus oaxacana*, *P. leiophylla*, *P. pseudostrobus*, *P. douglasiana*, *P. oocarpa*, *P. patula*, *P. rudis*, *P. ayacahuite*, *P. lawsonii*, *P. teocote*, *P. michoacana*.

The above do not grow haphazardly: they favour a broad elevational band. Some have excellent natural pruning abilities – e.g. *P. pseudostrobus*, others e.g. *P. oaxacana* do not. Pitch content also varies. After kiln drying for 8 – 12 days, whatever resin is left in the wood, is crystallized and does not affect quality for furniture making.

There are other conifer genera present such as *Abies* (at high elevations), *Podocarpus*, *Juniperus*, *Cupressus*. Of the above only the true firs have commercial significance, although not presently exploited by Ixtlán. Alder (*Alnus acuminata*) is quite common in the draws. There is also an arbutus (*Arbutus jalapensis*) which looks exactly the same as the Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) on Vancouver Island and on the British Columbia Coast. Despite the relatively low annual rainfall of 1,000 to 1,200 mm in Ixtlán itself, there are many epiphytes, especially bromeliads on oaks, quite pretty when in flower.

There are over 15 species of oaks mixed in with the pines to a larger or lesser degree, some of them with straight boles and reaching considerable dimensions. Unfortunately, they are not being utilized industrially, but only for firewood or traditional construction. The local sawmill, dry kilns and furniture factory are set up only to handle pines. Oaks are hard and contain much water, thus more difficult to mill.

For the readers interested in fauna, the main species are: white tail deer, peccary, cougar, squirrels (they do quite a bit of damage by cutting immature pine cones), raccoon and fox. Jaguar is the main predator in the tropical rainforests i.e. on the northern slopes of Ixtlán's area. Presently those forests are reserved by the community which feels that by opening them up with roads, illegal settlers would move in.

Some years ago the community decided to put a total ban on hunting. Since then the deer population has come back considerably. People used to hunt it not for subsistence but for sale.

There are two major forest pests on pines: a deadly mistletoe (*Psittacanthus caliculatus*). It affected 90,000 m<sup>3</sup> of which 50,000 m<sup>3</sup> had to be cut down. The other one is a bark beetle (*Dendroctonus adjunctus*) which does some damage on *Pinus rudis*, without being a major problem like the mountain pine beetle (*Dendroctonus ponderosae*) on lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*) here in British Columbia, Alberta. Montana etc.

The silviculture system used for harvesting on these slopes (averaging 60 – 70%) is a strip clear-cut, up to maximum 700 m long and 70 m wide: about half above the road, half below. Selected seed trees are left on the block. Trees are hand felled; a truck with a crane and winch yards them to the road. Before harvesting the pines in these mixed forests, firewood contractors go in and cut the oaks, leaving the branches which will be used to build contour trenches to ward against erosion (see photo below). Broken pieces and small diameter pine are sold for pulp.

**(photo removed)**

*View of strip clearcut. Note anti-erosion measures using oak and pine branches in Ixtlán community forest. The slope on this particular clearcut is less than average January 2009. FR photo*

Commercial thinnings are carried out with most of the wood being sold for pulp.

Plantation pine is pruned manually.

The rotation age is 40 years, with silvicultural interventions occurring about every ten years. The goal is to have 200 – 250 commercial pine trees/ha at harvesting time.

The majority of forests now being harvested seeded in naturally from nearby forests, as farmers were leaving the land for good, and shifting to other areas. Old irrigation ditches are still visible.

Volumes in mature, mixed natural pine-oak stands now average about 400-450 m<sup>3</sup>/ha of pine (down to a 15 cm top), with an average age of 40 – 50 years. Those volumes are likely to go up in the future with fuller stocking - natural regeneration with fill-in planting. The mean annual increment averages 11m<sup>3</sup>/ha/year. *Pinus patula* can produce up to 40 m<sup>3</sup>/ha/year in plantations.

A genetic selection program started quite a while ago. I saw individual pine trees with over 7 m<sup>3</sup> of commercial volume. (see photo below).

**(photo removed)**

*Ixtlán's Forest Engineer Julio Aurelio Ruíz near a Pinus oaxacana with 7 m<sup>3</sup> of commercial volume. January 2009 - FR*

There is no illegal logging here: forests are well guarded and monitored by locals on a daily basis. No stumpage is paid since the forests belong to the community. The Government levies a 10% tax on industrial products at the time of sales.

### **Ixtlán's land area**

The total land base of 19,280 ha is divided into the following, pretty well from north to south which means from wet to dry:

- 7,000 ha of humid forest and high elevation rainforest (*bosque mesófilo y selva alta*) on the slopes on the Atlantic side: watershed protection, carbon sink. This is the domain of the jaguar. The elevations there go from a few hundred to over 3,200 m, where high precipitation and fog are the norm.
- **3,000 ha of mixed pine-oak forests** set aside for sustainable forest harvesting with a management plan.
- 4,000 ha of mixed pine-oak forests, reserved for future harvesting, if the community so decides.
- over 5,000 ha of deciduous lowland forest on the lower slopes, transition forest, protection areas with species threatened by extinction, agricultural areas, grazing lands and human settlement,

*In other words, the whole forest community functions on the income of wood products from 3,000 ha of mixed forests. Pines of various species provide the bulk of the commercial wood which is about 20,000m<sup>3</sup>/ year at this moment (2009).*

### **How did it all start?**

In a nutshell: A private sawmill in Ixtlán started operating in 1949, then Fábrica de Papel de Tuxtepec (FAPATUX), a paper mill in Northern Oaxaca State took over, creaming the forests, yet leaving a network of well built forest roads. In 1975 that company made an agreement with four rural communities (including Ixtlán) to set up a society to manage the forest resource, with 51% of the social capital belonging to FAPATUX and 49% to the communities. In 1980 the communities became the sole owners. In 1982/83 the other three communities pulled out of the contract, leaving only Ixtlán. It is worth mentioning that over time there was some technical training of community members under FAPATUX with some government input.

First the community had a small sawmill and sold lumber. Then the desire for value added products arose, leading over time to the full production chain from logs to furniture. The only products not exploited in this community are oaks (beyond firewood and the odd use as roof timbers for local construction) and pine resin (see below). Small diameter and low quality pine is sold for pulp.

Like elsewhere in Mexico, sawlogs are cut into small lengths to fit the width of trucks, i.e. only 2.75 m!

### **Ixtlán's economic diversity:**

- The *comuneros* own the (forest) industrial area with a modern sawmill, two dry kilns and a furniture factory ([www.ucfas.com](http://www.ucfas.com)). All of the above are totally modern, computerized and paid for i.e. no debt! No waste either, other than sawdust. The finger jointer utilizes pieces as short as a pencil! Sawmill "left-overs" such as mini squares about 5x5 cm are sent to a neighbouring village to turn into broomsticks (see photo).

- The forest community members oversee the technical forest services and their staff is accountable to the General Assembly of Community Members.
- They have an eco-tourism program in a forested area close to town, with a network of trails and their own guides for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, rappelling, a zipline (the latter is a great hit with adults and kids alike in every eco-tourist spot throughout Mexico); cabins, a restaurant ([www.ecoturixtlan.com](http://www.ecoturixtlan.com)). Ecotourism, with its 13 employees, is not yet yielding a profit.
- They employ mainly women to bottle water for sale in Oaxaca City.
- They own Ixtlán's only gas station including a tanker truck (photo)
- They run a furniture outlet in Oaxaca City.
- They set up a credit line for locals willing to start a sustainable business e.g. trout farming, of which there are two. I visited the smaller one producing "only" five tons of rainbow trout sold in the restaurant above town, the limiting factor for increasing production being water quantity (photo).

I found the environmental awareness of the local people to be very high. Any quads and dirt bikes out there tearing up the countryside would be unthinkable for people who go through such lengths during logging to protect the soil during logging to prevent soil erosion. They know that soil is their greatest asset for true sustainability.

The income and profits from the above listed community owned enterprises are distributed according to a specific pattern to:

- Factory workers (not all of them are "*comuneros*"): wages and fringe benefits.
- Community members "*comuneros*" who are the owners of the resources
- Infrastructure needs e.g. roads, hospitals, schools.
- The forest: reinvestment in nursery and fill-in planting (natural regeneration being the rule), technical support (forest engineer and staff), damaged forest areas (insects and/or fire, the latter being uncommon).
- People over 70 living in Ixtlán: a modest, yet totally voluntary pension.

In Mexico the legal minimum wage varies from state to state. All federal agencies e.g. CONAFOR which is the Federal Forest Service, use the minimum wage of Mexico-city where it is presently (January of 2009) just under \$53 (53 Mexican pesos). Ixtlán pays \$150 i.e. almost triple the national average, seven days a week, although people only work 5! Of course, technical people are paid more.

When I asked one of the older *comuneros*, why they do not make charcoal from all the oaks being cut - I had seen charcoal used in this small town for barbecuing meat in the streets - he answered: we need special people to do that. What do you mean? **There is no unemployment here: everybody of working age in this community has already a job!** We have to buy charcoal from neighbouring communities.

With the possible exception of a bit of advice and training regarding forest management, all the above happened without government help. A bunch of poor farmers came to realize that traditional agriculture on these steep slopes was not sustainable, so they gave up farming and switched to forestry and they ended up doing the whole production chain from logging to certified furniture products. Congratulations!

There is not enough space here to go into the details of tapping pines for resin, something I visited in a neighbouring community.

To BC now:

Think of what we might learn from those Mexicans for our small, forest-dependent BC communities and First Nations bands, assuming a more flexible Government approach, starting with land tenure. Even well-intentioned woodlot owners here complain about excessive Government bureaucracy (ex. the RESULTS program to enter annual report details, an incredibly convoluted maze) and unreasonable stumpage rates, at least until very recently i.e. up to December 2008.

One of the lessons to be learned from the Mexican example above is the forests have the function of serving the local people.

In BC the Government remains the owner of the forests, is (pretty well) only interested in revenue from the wood without concern about the local people including the people working in the bush.

Recently on CBC I overheard a conversation about the effects of the closure of the pulpmill in McKenzie (BC). While the Minister of Forests was optimistic for political reasons a local resident of 30 years made the following statement: “**as long as the fibre is not tied to the community there is no future** (for the locals)”.

Yesterday I ran into Gordon Prest in Merritt. He is a FN forester who used to teach at NVIT, then worked at UBC’s Forestry Faculty to increase the enrolment of aboriginal students. He told me that he is helping Ron Trosper, Associate Professor for Aboriginal Forestry to develop a “Community and Aboriginal Forestry” curriculum stream within UBC’s Faculty of Forestry which will start as a pilot project at UBC in Sept 2009.

On February 6, 2009 the Merritt Herald Weekender published an article mentioning that Gordon Prest had been named the 2009 National Aboriginal Achievement Award. Here is an excerpt which I find relevant for our reflexions tonight:

*“Prest foresees the forest industry to downsize and go back to its roots after “the dust settles” from the pine beetle manifestation (sic, obviously a misprint for “infestation”), as the current level of cuts is not sustainable. Community owned operations that specialize will survive, he says, and the “spaghetti mills” will move on to follow money.*

*He goes on to point out that the aboriginal population will be part of the community that remains and diversifies, as they have a vested interest in the land. First Nations do not move.... they have the opportunity to capitalize, and the responsibility to facilitate sound forest practices....”*

Right now there are so-called community forests in BC. Examples in the BC Interior are Likely, Burns Lake, Harrod-Proctor (near Nelson) and Princeton. However, these are not “true” community forests but merely a form of tenure. The land is and remains Crown Land. They do have a relatively strong community link and are administered by community organizations under the form of a corporation or a society (info provided by Dave Haley, RPF, the MOF’s Woodlot Licence Forester from Victoria HQ).

Some of the problems of BC regarding forestry and forest products, the way I see them, are high wages, the dependence on international markets, and the forest tenure system - with the vast majority of the forested land belonging to the Crown and the large timber companies have volume based tenures rather than land based ones – the Crown will not give up property rights easily and who would like to see forest companies turn into real estate sales - then there is the lack of practical experience with eco-forestry management, and possibly the unions who might be against small community forests since they want to control who gets the jobs.

Commodities typically go through huge swings and boom or bust cycles. Competing in Europe against the supply from other sources is not easy. Closer to home (this is a truism), when the home construction in the US goes down lumber companies and sawmilling communities suffer. The local demand is not high for construction lumber, the desire for value added products has not been pushed enough in my opinion after the FRBC effort about 10 years ago which only lasted a short while.

Mexico with a population of 105 million and a limited forest resource base has a very strong internal market, therefore communities have no problems selling their products. The more value they can add at the local level the higher the price they get for their resource, thus the success story of Ixtlán.

Back to our PAC group:

As stated above, FSC (the Forest Stewardship Council) started in Oaxaca-City under Dr. Timothy Synnott of Oxford University. To what degree that helped in the certification process with local community forests I am unable to say.

You will have some questions about certification process, indicators, targets etc. Unfortunately I did not ask about that while in Oaxaca, yet sent a long list of questions with input from Pat Salm to a forestry official there earlier this week. I phoned Oaxaca this morning and got a brief answer because that forester has not had the time yet for more detailed answers. If you are interested i.e. if you have specific questions please let me know and I will contact him again and get you the answers which I can e-mail to you.

Here is some information regarding certification:

Of the total forest area under management in Mexico about 13% are certified which in 2007 represented 772,166 ha. SmartWood and Grupo Vida are the certification seals for forest management in Mexico. They check the whole chain of custody. Certification is voluntary.

The communities themselves define their land use and conservation policies. For areas under management with harvesting plans, species at risk - as defined by the national Government - have to be respected (=protected).

Communities with certified forests are given priority by certain institutions that prefer to buy wood products with the FSC label.

Ixtlán was certified in 2001, re-assessed by the FSC in 2006 for another 5 years. The community then got a contract with the State Government to produce certified school furniture (see projected photos).

According to their brochure, here are the advantages to the Ixtlán as a result of certification:

- Access to preferential bank credit
- **Improved forest management as a result of annual audits**
- Improved entrepreneurial spirit amongst community members
- Additional (forest) industrial development

Neighbouring indigenous communities have been stimulated to follow suit i.e. start managing their forests themselves rather than just selling logs.

Please e-mail me your comments which I want to incorporate into a revised version for publication in a professional journal. Thanks

[franzreuter@yahoo.com](mailto:franzreuter@yahoo.com)

ph: 250 378-6651

## **Revision of the CSA SFM Standard**

Pat Salm - April 4, 2009

### **History of CSA SFM**

In 1995 the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers produced a national framework of criteria and indicators to help track the nation's progress in achieving Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). In the absence of an internationally accepted Standard, the Canadian Standards Association was asked to develop a voluntary Standard for Canada. CSA was chartered in 1919 and has developed over 3000 standards for various industries. The CSA SFM System was developed in accordance with national and international initiatives to develop criteria and indicators for SFM.

The CSA SFM Standard was first published in 1996 following more than a year of extensive public participation and development by a Technical Committee. One quarter of the Technical Committee was comprised of forest producers, while the remainder were scientists, academics, and representatives of government, aboriginals, labour unions, consumers and environmentalists.

The CSA SFM standard has been maintained in an open public process by the Technical Committee and was first reviewed and revised in 2002. A second review and revision to the standard was completed in March, 2009.

### **CSA Z809-08**

A volunteer Technical Committee drafted changes to the standard based on new information, input from companies and public advisory groups, and feedback from other interested parties. Interests represented on the Technical Committee include forestry academics and researchers, forest companies, environmental groups, consumers, labour unions, Aboriginal people, government regulators, and the general public.

A draft of the standard was circulated for public review and comment. The public review resulted in responses from 17 stakeholder groups and individuals. The CSA Technical Committee reviewed each response and revised the draft standard based on the comments received.

The revised draft standard was sent to the Technical Committee for ballot in December, 2008 and was unanimously approved.

Listed on the following pages are key changes to the CSA Standard.

## Core Indicators

A set of 34 mandatory Core Indicators has been added under the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Elements to bring a level of consistency to SFM Plans developed under the standard. These include indicators in areas such as:

- Biological diversity (including sites of special biological significance, native species)
- Species at risk
- Maintenance of forest ecosystems and their resilience
- Conservation of soil and water
- Carbon uptake and storage
- Forest land conversion
- Timber and non-timber benefits
- Sustainable communities
- Aboriginal participation, rights, values, knowledge and uses; and
- Public participation processes.

Other indicators, as well as locally appropriate targets for all indicators, will be identified through the local public participation process.

## Discussion Items

Over 55 public consultation groups operate in CSA certified forests across Canada. They participate at the local community level in the development and monitoring of CSA Sustainable Forest Management Plans and ongoing forestry discussions. Often they participate in the development of various forestry plans required under provincial regulations as well. This high degree of public involvement reflects the Canadian context the CSA standard was developed for, where 93% of the forests are publicly owned.

Key topics that must be discussed during the public consultation process have been added for each of the Council of Canadian Forest Ministers' (CCFM) criterion. This becomes part of the two way education and exchange of information that occurs for each defined forest area. A total of 27 items have been identified as requiring discussion.

For example topics to be discussed under *CCFM Criterion 1 –Conservation of Biological Diversity* must include:

- Forest fragmentation and forest loss
- Management in the context of natural disturbance regimes and the natural range of variation
- Maintenance of populations and communities over time
- Local and regional protected areas and integrated landscape management
- Silvicultural practices (including harvesting)
- Practices to limit the spread of invasive alien species
- Gene pool of native seed stock (breeding program)
- Management of cultural values and resources

## Public Participation Process

Revisions to the public consultation requirement of the standard were guided by results of a survey sent to all public advisory groups across Canada, input from public advisory group members of the Technical Committee, insights from letters received from public advisory groups over the previous 2-3 years, and face-to-face meetings between public advisory group members and the Technical Committee.

These revisions include, among other things, the addition of a mechanism to measure participant's level of satisfaction with the process, and a transparency section that clearly identifies in one location information requiring full public disclosure.

## **Aboriginal Consideration**

A separate Aboriginal Working Group was formed within the Technical Committee to review the Aboriginal requirements and guidance sections of the standard. The group used feedback from Aboriginal organizations, resource documents and expert advice, and proposed changes that are reflected in the following requirements:

- Understand and comply with the current legal requirements related to Aboriginal rights and title, and treaty rights
- Clarification that Aboriginal people can participate in CSA public consultation processes and the development of forestry plans without prejudice to Aboriginal title and rights, and treaty rights.
- Understand Aboriginal forest values, knowledge, uses -- and incorporate them into forestry plans.
- Use of Aboriginal knowledge to identify and manage culturally important resources and values
- Respect for traditional Aboriginal forest values and uses identified through the Aboriginal input process
- Promotion of capacity development and meaningful participation of Aboriginal communities
- Levels of Aboriginal participation in the forest economy

## **Safety, Worker Protection, Community Sustainability**

Requirements around safety, worker protection and community sustainability have also been strengthened, and include:

- Evidence that the organization has cooperated with other forest-dependent businesses, forest users and the local community to strengthen and diversify the local economy
- Evidence of cooperation with DFA-related workers and their unions to improve and enhance safety standards, procedures, and outcomes in all DFA-related workplaces and affected communities.
- Evidence that a worker safety program is implemented and periodically reviewed and improved.

## **Looking for more information on the changes?**

Annex C (starting on page 75) of the CSA Z809-08 standard document has more detailed information on the changes made from the 2002 version of the standard.