



## Message from B.C.'s Minister of Forests



British Columbia is a world leader in the practice of forestry. Thanks to our vast and plentiful natural resource, we have emerged as the single largest exporter of softwood in the world. In addition, we have also emerged as a leader in environmental protection and sustainable forest management.

Forestry is the single most important economic contributor to our people and our province. Due to its scope and scale, forestry will remain the most important engine of our economy well into the foreseeable future.

However, over much of the last decade, the forest sector has declined sharply. The impact of this decline has not been limited to private industry or shareholders, but has affected forest workers and forest communities directly, and every person in this province indirectly.

How did we allow our forest sector to get into such a precarious position? The answer is partly in outdated regulations that have limited the forest sector's ability to react to the rapid pace of change here and around the world. Sadly, our regulations have been unable to provide widespread or continued community stability, especially in recent years. As well, the manner in which our forest industry and our province developed often unintentionally limited opportunities for new participants in the sector, constraining entrepreneurship and discouraging innovation.

The solution is clear. We must open up the forest sector to new opportunities, new participants and new ideas. We must update forestry regulations. We must undertake comprehensive change with a singular purpose: to revitalize British Columbia's forest sector.

By doing so, we will reinvigorate the economic foundation of the province and thereby ultimately improve the quality of life of every British Columbian.

**Michael de Jong, Minister of Forests**