

Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec



Status Report on the Implementation of Forestry-Related Provisions

2002-2008

Abridged version



Conseil Cris-Québec sur la foresterie
Cree-Québec Forestry Board

Executive Summary

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB) is responsible for the monitoring, analysis and assessment of the implementation of Chapter 3 of the *Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Gouvernement of Québec and the Crees of Québec*. In keeping with the Board's mandate, this status report sets out the assessment results of the first six years of implementation of the forestry-related provisions of the Agreement, from its signing on February 7, 2002, up to March 31, 2008.

The approach Board members adopted to produce the assessment is based on a two-tiered analysis that involved, on one hand, initiating workshops with the parties' representatives to proceed to the detailed analysis of the implementation of each of the forestry-related provisions of the Agreement and, on the other hand, conducting a tour of the frontline stakeholders engaged in the implementation of Chapter 3 of the Agreement (tallymen, TSFMA holders as well as JWG members and coordinators) to seek out their views and identify potential avenues for improvement.

First and foremost, results of the detailed analysis show that the large majority of forestry-related provisions have been implemented. Modalities of the adapted forestry regime have been gradually integrated into annual planning in the framework of the transitory measures provided for in the Agreement. The tallymen of the five Cree communities of the Territory were especially called upon to map sites of special interest and participate in implementing the elaboration, consultation and monitoring processes of the forest management plans set out in the Agreement. Representatives appointed by the Cree party and the gouvernement du Québec learnt to share different views and outlooks by sitting on the CQFB and on the Joint Working Groups (JWGs).

Even if the detailed analysis shows commitments requiring further development, it is nevertheless important to note that, throughout the first six years of implementation, the parties have shown flexibility and initiative when required. They have worked to implement a new forestry regime and make it operational by adapting its modalities when necessary, in keeping with the spirit of the Agreement.

On the other hand, the tour of the stakeholders constitutes the second dimension of the assessment. Generally speaking, stakeholders were mostly satisfied with all the efforts made and noted the parties' goodwill. They perceived this common will as a positive aspect making it possible to gradually build a relationship of trust and, ultimately, a viable partnership.

However, stakeholders voiced a certain amount of lack of understanding and some dissatisfaction in response to several more specific issues regarding some of the adapted forestry regime modalities, which they hope will improve.

For example, many some tallymen appreciate their increased involvement in the forest planning process but said they do not observe noticed no changedifferences yet in the way operations are carried out in the Territory. JWG members consider they have a positive contribution in the implementation of the Agreement but deplorementioned their lack of training, of resources and of support both in forestry techniques on the one hand and in Cree culture on the other. Finally, TSFMA holders emphasize the advantage of operating in a clear regime but deplore the very rigid normative framework, which makes planning more complex and leaves little room for initiatives aiming at harmonizing silvicultural practices.

All in all, it seems that stakeholders in no way question the Agreement as a whole. However, they hope for improvement in its ongoing application. Criticism also points to the fact that stakeholders want to be part of the solution, which certainly bodes well.

In order to guide the parties in future actions pertaining to the implementation of the adapted forestry regime, integration of the findings of the detailed analysis and of the tour enables to draw a list of priority issues to target from an ongoing improvement standpoint. First and foremost, the assessment suggests that JWG accountability should be clarified and that JWG members need more training, supervision, support, resources and funding in order to fulfill their mandate. Then, the assessment highlights how important it is to provide stakeholders with clear and timely direction and input in order to optimize forest management plan development, consultation and approval. It is also of the utmost importance to ensure that tallymen are better informed on the mechanisms of the Agreement and on the role they are called upon to play in the implementation of the adapted forestry regime. The assessment also indicates the need to contemplate adding impetus to the initiatives related to the monitoring of the modalities and objectives of the Agreement. Finally, the report conveys the wish of several stakeholders for improved sharing of the information and databases required to implement the adapted forestry regime.

Regarding these issues, the following recommendations are submitted to the parties:

- Mandate a joint task force to assess the different aspects of JWG governance and, if the parties agree, propose adjustments in this regard;
- Ensure that the Agreement development, consultation and approval process for forest management plans is clearly interpreted, better timed and consistently implemented;
- Strengthen tallymen's contribution to the forest management planning process;

- Strengthen JWG members' intervention capability so they can contribute, within their mandate, to the monitoring of the modalities of the adapted forestry regime;
- Jointly establish the monitoring systems required to measure attainment of the objectives of Chapter 3 of the Agreement;
- Ensure that Agreement stakeholders have permanent access to a common, updated data bank.

To give effect to these recommendations, the parties must jointly initiate in depth reflection on the findings of this report. It is thus recommended they:

- Set up a parties' task force mandated to follow up on the priority issues and recommendations as soon as possible.

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List of Acronyms

AFMP	Annual Forest Management Plan
ANRQC	Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec
CQFB	Cree-Québec Forestry Board
CRA	Cree Regional Authority
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FPDO	Forest Protection and Development Objective
GFMP	General Forest Management Plan
JBNQA	James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement
JWG	Joint Working Group
MDDEP	Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs du Québec
MRNF	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune du Québec
TRU	Territorial Reference Unit
TSFMA	Timber Supply and Forest Management Agreement

1. Introduction

On February 7, 2002, the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees signed the “Paix des braves”, a “nation-to-nation Agreement which strengthens the political, economic and social relations between Québec and the Crees, and which is characterized by cooperation, partnership and mutual respect”.



Both the Cree Nation and the Québec Nation agree to “place emphasis in their relations on those aspects that unite them as well as on their common desire to continue the development of Northern Québec and the self-fulfilment of the Cree Nation. The Cree Nation must continue to benefit from its rich cultural heritage, its language and its traditional way of life in a context of growing modernization”.

The Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec (ANRQC) contains a whole

chapter on forestry, whose provisions are designed to implement an adapted forestry regime.

This regime defines specific rules and procedures, applicable to the Territory governed by the Agreement, to better reflect the Cree traditional way of life, increasingly incorporate sustainable development concerns and ensure that the Cree can participate more fully in forest management planning and development activities.

The ANRQC created two implementation mechanisms: the Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB), designed to permit close consultation of the Crees at various stages of forest planning and management activities in order to implement the adapted forestry regime, and Joint Working Groups (JWG) for the different Cree communities to incorporate and implement the Agreement’s specific modalities.

To fulfil its mandate, the CQFB monitors, reports on and evaluates implementation of the Agreement’s forestry-related provisions. In this context, in March 2005, the Board presented an initial assessment on the Agreement’s implementation. Certain priorities allowing the evaluation of the compliance with the Agreement’s modalities and implementation mechanisms were identified and led to exercises such as assessment of the Joint Working Groups, following which a notice on JWG functioning was sent to the parties in November 2005.

The Board then included production of an overall assessment of the first five years of the Agreement's application in its 2006-2007 action plan. However, given that the production and the upcoming analysis of a new generation of general forest management plans (GFMP) represented a unique opportunity to reinforce the processes while considering the objectives of the Agreement, the Board agreed to postpone the assessment and focus on the GFMPs. Doing so provided the opportunity to include the results of the GFMP exercise in the assessment framework.

The Board pursued its work on the Agreement assessment following its February 21, 2007 meeting, in which its members mandated it to produce a two-tiered analysis: (1) a factual analysis of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions, section by section, and (2) an overall analysis of respect of the spirit of the Agreement in order to identify recommendations for adjustments to the adapted forestry regime.

To do so, the Board initiated workshops with the parties' representatives to complete the factual picture of the application of the Agreement's provisions and conducted a tour to consult the stakeholders involved in implementing the Agreement to determine their overall satisfaction and identify potential improvements.

In keeping with the Board's mandate, the present status report contains the results of the assessment of the implementation of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions from its signing, in 2002, to March 31, 2008, the date marking the end of the 2008-2013 GFMP elaboration and analysis process.

Section 2 of the report presents the methodology used for the factual and overall analyses of the Agreement's implementation and comments the results in keeping with the different sections of Chapter 3 and Schedule C. It ends with an evaluation of the extent to which the implementation objectives were attained.

Section 3 deals with stakeholders' viewpoints, describing the survey methodology used and reviewing their assessment based on each of the Agreement's major themes discussed.

Finally, follows Section 4 on the identification of priorities and the formulation of recommendations designed to orient the parties and the Board in their subsequent actions regarding evolution of the ANRQC's adapted forestry regime.

All the documents supporting the analysis are presented in the complete status report of the assessment. This report is available on the Cree-Québec Forestry Board's web site : www.ccqf-cqfb.ca.

2. Analysis of Application of the Agreement's Forestry-Related Provisions

This initial analysis consisted of an in-depth study assessing implementation of each of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions and covered Chapter 3 and Schedule C. The purpose was not to judge the validity or relevance of the provisions at this stage but to assess their implementation and compliance with them as best possible.

The following paragraphs describe the approach used to analyze, summarize and comment findings in keeping with the different sections of Chapter 3 and Schedule C and, more generally, assess the extent to which the implementation objectives were attained.

2.1 Methodology

In the context of this status report, the Cree-Québec Forestry Board began by analyzing the application of all of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions in depth in close collaboration with both parties' representatives.

This consisted in describing the actions taken to implement each provision of Chapter 3 and Schedule C. The working group met several times to prepare a joint description of actions for each of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions. This information was collated in the table shown in Appendix 1 of the complete status report of the assessment. This detailed analysis describes these actions and the contextual elements needed to understand them, where applicable.

The Board Secretariat supported this work, preparing various compilations, i.e. the number of meetings and Board advices, fact and date accuracy, result integration for presentation in synthesis form.

In further meetings and discussions, the parties' representatives finally validated a complete version of the detailed analysis, which is a thorough examination of the Agreement's implementation.

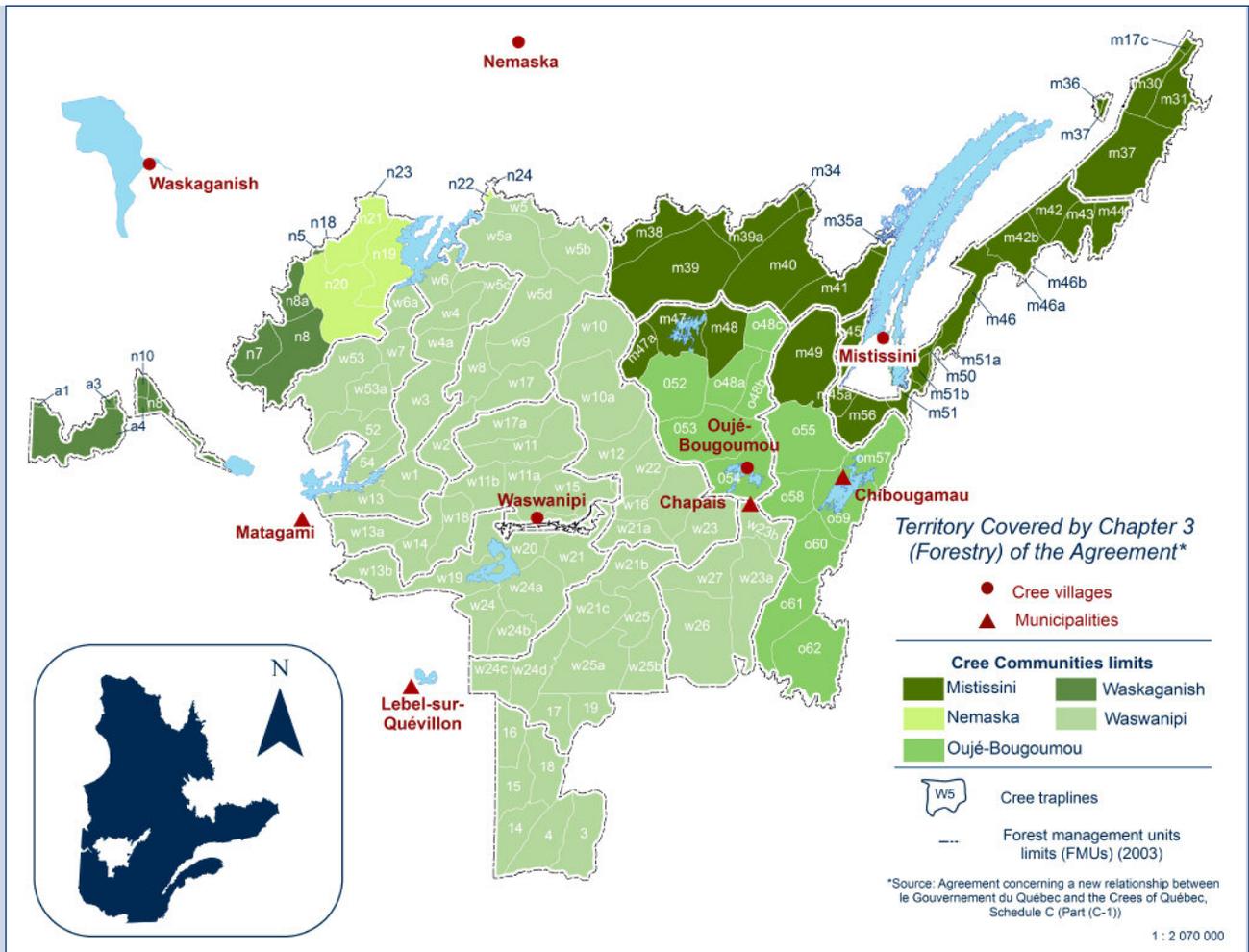
2.2 Review of Results by Agreement Section

Here, we will present the synthesized findings of the detailed analysis by section of Chapter 3 of the Agreement and Schedule C.

Note that no comments have been made concerning the implementation of sections 3.1 and 3.2, which contain general provisions or state the adapted forestry regime's objectives.

Territory of Application (section 3.3 and Schedule C-1)

The adapted forestry regime's territory of application was determined when the Agreement was signed and considered in its entirety since the Agreement's implementation. The problem that arose was that although the territory illustrated in Schedule C-1 excludes a perimeter around the municipality of Chibougamau, the parties included this perimeter during their discussions on the new forest management unit (FMU) boundaries, an initiative provided for in the Agreement (section 3.8). The parties agreed to discuss about including this perimeter in the territory of application at the next opportunity to amend the Agreement.



Adaptations to and Evolution of the Forestry Regime *(sections 3.4 to 3.6)*

The parties agreed within the context of the Agreement that the adapted forestry regime was likely to evolve over time. The first six years of implementation allowed the parties to apply the regime and enabled the Board to observe its functioning. The parties showed adaptability when necessary.

To date, adaptations have taken the form of five amendments to the Agreement negotiated between the parties. Two of them specifically affected forestry-related provisions. These amendments allow adjustments to the transition period, which had to be extended due to the need for reviewing the annual allowable cut in Québec forests. Consequently, given the delay in the coming into effect of the new generation of GFMPs, the implementation of elaboration and consultation processes of forest management plans was postponed with both parties' authorization.

An administrative agreement on a technical document provides for a timber recovery procedure in case of a natural disaster (Schedule C-6). This agreement became necessary following a year of devastating forest fires in the Territory, an eventuality the Agreement did not fully address.

Apart from these modifications, the Board also reports on desired developments to the Agreement in its advices to the parties, which were received and should be negotiated by the parties.

Modalities of the Adapted Forestry Regime *(section 3.7 to 3.13)*

Considerable work has been done to ensure implementation of the modalities of the new adapted forestry regime instituted by the Agreement. Here are the highlights:

Limits of the Territorial Reference Units and Use of Ecological Data *(section 3.7)*

In keeping with the standard proposed, the parties adjusted the territorial reference units (TRU) to trapline boundaries. The map defining trapline boundaries supplied by the CRA contains certain discrepancies, however, since some trappers preferred working on a scale of 1:50,000 rather than 1:20,000. Boundaries which do not coincide will have to be rectified to facilitate application of the adapted forestry regime.

Determination of New Management Units

(section 3.8)

The work of a Provisional Cree-Québec Working Team made it possible to propose new forest management units based on criteria defined in the Agreement. The AAC for the 2008-2013 planning exercise was calculated on the basis of these new units. Note that the map of FMUs appears in Appendix 1 of the first amendment to the Agreement.

Sites of Special Interest to the Cree

(sections 3.9 and 3.10)

The tallymen were consulted, in a cooperative effort involving both parties, to identify sites of interest protected from all forestry activity over an area representing 1% of the total area of each trapline. At March 31, 2008, this exercise had been completed for 109 of the territory's 119 traplines. The modality applicable to 1% sites was implemented and incorporated into forest management planning as soon as mapping of the sites in question had been completed.

A similar cooperative exercise between the parties led to mapping forested areas presenting wildlife interest for the Cree. The size of these lands identified by the tallymen represents 25% of the productive forest area of each trapline. At March 31, 2008, this exercise had been completed for the same 109 traplines. The Cree had not finished identifying sites of special interest in FMU 84-62 and for certain traplines of the community of Nemaska. The measures for conserving these sites were progressively incorporated into annual planning as soon as the information became available.

Overall, the MNRF affirms that the management modalities for these sectors of interest were scrupulously observed. The Cree party deplors its lack of access to MRNF data and analyses concerning monitoring of these modalities.

Maintaining Forest Cover in the Whole of Each Trapline

(section 3.11)

Modalities governing maintaining a forest cover in the whole of each trapline were progressively integrated into annual planning. The MRNF maintains a data base allowing the definition of the level of cutting allowable each year based on trapline size and natural disturbances. The Cree party also deplored not having access to MRNF data and analyses for the follow-up of these modalities.

Protection of Forests Adjacent to Watercourses and Lakes (section 3.12)

The MRNF has developed shapefile making it possible to identify permanent watercourses and lakes of sufficient size for application of the modality but no geomatic tool is available to assess the width of a river under 40 meters. For the modality targeting rivers over 5 meters wide, teams must rely on their knowledge of the land.

The Cree party pointed out confusion since determining that a river or lake is of sufficient size to warrant applying the measure seems completely arbitrary.

Development of a Road Access Network (section 3.13)

With regard to measures on the road access network, the analysis reveals that a coordination table on access was, in fact, created and submitted a report by the prescribed deadline. However, the parties did not follow up on the recommendations. Otherwise, the modalities provided for in the Agreement are subject to consultation of the tallymen on a case-by-case basis during forestry activity planning.

Cree-Québec Forestry Board (sections 3.15 to 3.32)



The Cree-Québec Forestry Board was created in 2003, and its Secretariat set up afterward. To date, 12 Cree members and 9 Québec members have held the ten seats available—five per party. The Chairman, who holds the eleventh seat, was appointed in keeping with the procedure decided on in consultation with the Cree Regional Authority. The fact that his mandate was renewed means that the same individual has been Chairman since the Board's creation.

With regard to Board operations, the analysis observed smooth functioning despite certain recurring problems such as the difficulty obtaining a quorum in meetings or the length of time often required to replace members who leave the Board.

By March 31, 2008, the Board had sent a total of 16 advices to the Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife concerning various files and 3 other advices to the parties. The Board considers that it obtained answers in keeping with Section 3.31 of the ANRQC to only 8 of these 19 notices.

Joint Working Groups (sections 3.33 to 3.47)

Joint Working Groups were set up for the five communities targeted by the adapted forestry regime. As stipulated in the Agreement, each JWG is composed of an equal number of representatives from the Cree communities and the MRNF. The number of members designated by the parties varies from one community to another depending on the scope of the task. JWG members have adopted their own internal operating rules and the parties have designated persons responsible for coordinating the groups' work.

Generally speaking, JWG members fulfil their mandate to the best of their capacity in a context of ongoing learning. For example, all JWGs are actively involved in implementing the majority of modalities governing the consultation of tallymen, helping to determine harmonization measures, analyzing usage conflict and proposing relevant solutions.

The detailed analysis nevertheless stresses that a considerable amount of information, often technical in nature, is transmitted during JWG meetings and that the Cree members are not always able to understand it. The lack of training in this regard is deplored.

While JWG members have made considerable efforts regarding forest management plan development and consultation, to date, no JWG has been involved in the forest management plan monitoring procedure.

Funding (sections 3.48 to 3.53)

As stipulated in the Agreement, each party covers the remuneration and expenditures of the members it designates to the CQFB. The Board Chairman's remuneration and expenses are paid by Québec, in keeping with the Agreement, and the parties pay half of the Board's operating expenses.

For JWG funding, the parties have agreed on special funding from Québec to cover the start-up and transition periods. While Québec covers 100% of the funding of its representatives, a special funding agreement for Cree JWGs was reached by the parties on December 7, 2004. Québec also agreed to pay 50% of Cree member's expenses, including salaries. This special agreement ended March 31, 2008.

Effect of the Adapted Forestry Regime

(section 3.54)

At the time of the analysis, nothing allowed us to conclude that the adapted forestry regime affects the Crees' hunting, fishing and trapping rights under the JBNQA or modifies the boundaries of Cree traplines.

Access to Forest Resources

(sections 3.55 to 3.59)

Québec has met its commitments regarding Cree access to forest resources in terms of volumes of timber available to Cree enterprises.

Employment and Contracts

(section 3.60)

To comply with the Agreement's provisions governing employment and contracts, Québec has made arrangements that once the 2008-2013 general forest management plans are in effect, the information required will be transmitted by the forestry enterprises in their plans and forestry reports.

The relevant documents, i.e. instructions for producing forest management plans and the digital exchange standards governing the annual forest management plan and annual forestry report, were modified accordingly.

No official forum has been organized between the Cree and the Territory's logging companies on the subject of employment and contracts.

Muskuchii Territory

(sections 3.61 and 3.62 and Schedule C-5)

The Cree initiated discussions with the MDDEP and this territory is now a "planned biodiversity reserve". The area protected is now much bigger than that presented in the ANRQC and Muskuchii should obtain permanent biodiversity reserve status by 2011.

Firewood

(sections 3.63 and 3.64)

The parties do not agree on the interpretation of modalities linked to firewood. However, they have agreed on an interim application to be used for 2008-2013 GFMPs, but no official document has been signed.

Agreements with Forestry Enterprises (section 3.65)

This modality has been implemented but sometimes opens the door to special requests from tallymen or from forestry enterprises which are difficult to harmonize with the adapted forestry regime. The parties accept the concept of agreements that are made directly between tallymen and forestry enterprises but wish that the JVGs would not promote them during consultation meetings, particularly when they transgress other provisions of the Agreement.

Mosaic Cutting with Protection of Regeneration and Soils (Schedule C-2)



The modality governing mosaic cutting with regeneration and soil protection is applied rigorously according to the MRNF's evaluation.

Maintaining of a Forest Cover in the Whole of Each Trapline (Schedule C-3)

The data needed to assess the implementation of the modality designed to preserve hardwood trees are not available. It is not clear that this modality was implemented in the precommercial thinning operations.

To protect established regeneration, no specific action was taken regarding harvesting techniques in the context of the adapted forestry regime's implementation.

Finally, considering the importance of mixed stands for wildlife habitats and the scarcity of such stands on certain parts of the Territory, the Agreement provides for development of a separate management approach for these stands. The MRNF began developing such a management strategy in September 2004 but various delays and changes in the development approach resulted in the strategy used for the 2008-2013 GFMPs presenting forest-related objectives but no wildlife objectives. The MRNF has never asked the Board to participate in developing a mixed stand management strategy despite the fact that this was stipulated in the Agreement.

Elaboration, Consultation and Monitoring of Forest Management Plans

(Schedule C-4)

Schedule C-4 discussing plan elaboration, consultation and monitoring was the object of substantial work by the parties to make the adapted forestry regime's implementation in forestry planning tangible.

General Forest Management Plans

(Schedule C-4, section 2)

Generally speaking, the Minister defined a FPDO specific to the Territory in an exercise considering the proposals submitted by JWG members and in conjunction with the CQFB. In his instructions to TSFMA holders for producing the GFMPs, he issued specific directives including a Cree section reflecting the principles and modalities stipulated in the Agreement.

Specifically for the preparation of general forest management plans, a major process involving documentation of the Crees' occupation of the territory was initiated by the Cree and the CQFB in order to optimize the tallymen's participation in plan development. This tool was incorporated into the development of some 2008-2013 GFMPs despite some problems linked to confidentiality which delayed data availability. These problems were resolved through the signature of confidentiality agreement between the parties and CAAF holders.

The parties also agreed on a dispute resolution process promoting dialogue between TSFMA holders and tallymen and involving JWG members as facilitators. The Board submitted a list of conciliators to the Minister and, by March 31, 2008, only one request for conciliation had been presented by JWG members regarding construction of a road and then withdrawn because the parties finally reached an agreement.



For the 2008-2013 GFMP approval process, members of the JWGs for the communities most affected by the plans (Mistissini, Oujé-Bougoumou and Waswanipi) submitted their analysis to the Minister and the CQFB. The Board reviewed the 15 GFMPs based on an approach and principles previously agreed to with the parties and submitted an advice to this effect to the Minister.

Annual Forest Management Plans

(Schedule C-4, section 3)

For the preparation of the annual forest management plans, each JWG adopted its own consultation process. Various such processes were tested by JWG members. At the request of those involved, contrary to what is stipulated in the Agreement regarding consensus-seeking, some of these processes do not involve direct contact between tallymen and TSFMA holders. Some JWG members therefore act as contacts between these stakeholders and, as a result, constitute intermediaries rather than facilitators. Harmonization measures are developed with the support of JWG members when required. Where applicable, usage conflicts are documented using minutes and records specific to each JWG.

The MRNF determines whether the AFMPs comply with the management strategies, prescriptions, allowable cut, provincial forest management standards and the Agreement. Since 2002, no official notice was sent to the Board or the JWGs regarding AFMP compliance or non-compliance.

Plan Monitoring

(Schedule C-4, section 4)

To date, JWG members have not been involved in forest management monitoring. No periodic progress report or annual summary of the results of checks on work carried out was transmitted to JWG members.

With regard to monitoring forest evolution, we should point out the initiative of the CQFB, which, within its mandate, worked with various stakeholders to develop a wildlife habitat protection and development directives project. For the 2008-2013 GFMPs, the MRNF incorporated these directives into a “planning-aid guide” offered to TSFMA holders.

Regarding these directives, no wildlife objective was included in the ANRQC state of the forest review process. Generally speaking, to date, JWG members have not been involved in forest evolution follow-up or monitoring.

Transitional Measures

(Schedule C-4, section 5)

The parties agree on the fact that the transitional measures were followed and respected. The transition period was extended from 2005 to 2008 to reflect new GFMP deadlines and allowed progressive implementation of the Agreement’s modalities.

Salvage of Timber in Case of Natural Disasters (Schedule C-6)

Since the parties recognized the existence of a problem linked to timber recovery in cases involving natural disasters, a working group composed of three members designated by the MRNF and three members designated by the CRA was set up in March 2004. In June 2007, the parties reached an administrative agreement in order to implement, for a given period, a technical document on natural disaster management and recovery operations in the Territory. As of March 31, 2008, the technical review committee that was to be set up to monitor the efficacy of the administrative agreement had not been constituted.

2.3 Achievement of Objectives

Generally speaking, the new partnership created by the “Paix des braves” is tangible and positive where forest management is concerned. Over and above discussions between Cree and Québec authorities marking the negotiations, after the Agreement was signed, entities that had not interacted much in the past had to start working together.

For example, representatives designated by the Cree and by Québec learned to share different views and outlooks by sitting on the Cree-Québec Forestry Board and on Joint Working Groups. In the six years since the Agreement was signed, the CQFB has had more than 30 meetings in which we observe that unanimity was reached on almost all Board decisions and advices. The members of the five JWGs are in constant contact and are making progress in understanding and fulfilling their mandate.

With regard to this ongoing contact, the detailed analysis shows that Cree and Québec representatives still face numerous challenges and must continue to learn to collaborate despite their different organizational cultures and procedures. They must continue to develop a common language and common interpretation of the adapted forestry regime’s modalities despite the linguistic barrier and must step up their efforts to train stakeholders in technical forestry aspects and on Cree cultural components.

To ensure that the adapted forestry regime would be implemented and integrated progressively, the signatories agreed on transitional measures. In this regard, we should highlight the parties’ remarkable efforts to incorporate the adapted forestry regime’s provisions as quickly into annual management activity planning as possible.

The parties have also shown their willingness to work together to develop forest resources in planned or ad hoc committees, depending on the issue at stake, since the Agreement's signing, e.g. the Coordination Table on Access to the Territory, Provisional Cree-Québec working team and parties task force on natural disasters, all of which were designed to make headway in implementing the adapted forestry regime.

Finally, regarding the preparation of the 2008-2013 GFMPs, the parties developed participation tools, in close collaboration with JWG members, and went to considerable lengths to achieve the Agreement's objectives. The 15 GFMPs on the Territory governed by the Agreement were approved late in the process, with a commitment to recalculate the allowable cut using tools integrating the specific spatial features of the Paix des braves' forestry regime.

The detailed analysis shows that the very great majority of forestry-related provisions have been implemented...a success in itself.

It highlights certain aspects requiring further development—for example, processes linked to planning, commitments resulting from monitoring and the need for the Cree party to be informed in this regard, application of the FPDOs, the MRNF's statistical summary and the modalities of Schedule C-3 regarding maintaining a forest cover.

We should point out that, over the first six years of the Agreement's implementation, the parties have shown flexibility and initiative, when required, working to implement an adapted forestry regime and make it operational by adjusting its modalities in keeping with the spirit of the Agreement.

3. Viewpoints of Stakeholders

To conduct a more comprehensive analysis, validate and round out certain preliminary findings taken from the detailed analysis and define ANRQC implementation priorities, the Board, through its Secretariat, consulted the main Agreement stakeholders (tallymen, JWG members and coordinators, TSFMA holders) via a consultation tour.

The tour's objectives consisted in evaluating stakeholders' satisfaction with application of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions in order to identify potential improvements specific to each stakeholder group or common to all.

This section presents the approach used and summarizes stakeholders' viewpoints according to the Agreement's main themes, which were targeted in the questionnaires.

3.1 Methodology

The Board Secretariat conducted a survey of the three main groups closely affected by the Agreement's forestry-related provisions, namely: tallymen, JWG members and coordinators and, finally, TSFMA holders. The methodologies adapted to each group are summarized in the table below.

Methodology used for different stakeholder groups

Stakeholders	Consultation means	Sampling	Selection criteria
Tallymen	- Semi-directed individual interviews	Waswanipi: 16/62 Mistissini: 10/31 Oujé-Bougoumou: 8/13 Waskaganish: 3/8 Nemaska: 1/7	- Tallymen involved in the participation processes, mainly in the context of the 2008-2013 GFMPs - Tallymen reputed to be satisfied or dissatisfied with the Agreement's implementation, based on indications from Cree and Québec JWG members
JWG members	- Semi-directed joint Québec and Cree group interviews - Individual questionnaire	All groups except Waskaganish:* 4/5	N/A
Coordinators	- Semi-directed individual interviews	Each party's JWG coordinator: 2/2	N/A
TSFMA holders	- Semi-directed individual interviews	Territory's FMU management agents: 9/9	- Having been involved in the participation processes, mainly in the context of the 2008-2013 GFMPs

* At the time of the tour, there was no JWG in the community of Waskaganish.

To meet as many stakeholders as possible in their milieu, the Board Secretariat conducted three main tours of the Territory in 2008.

A first trip in April enabled meetings with the tallymen of Mistissini, Oujé-Bougoumou and Waswanipi. In a second trip in May, Board Secretariat representatives visited Abitibi and the Chibougamau-Chapais area to survey TSFMA holders and returned to the three Cree communities to talk with JWG members. Finally, meetings in Nemaska and Waskaganish in September permitted meeting with members of the Nemaska JWG and some tallymen from the two communities. The JWG coordinators were then met, one in Montréal and the other by conference call.

The Board Secretariat developed both the interview and individual questionnaires. For JWG members, many of the questions raised in the 2005 tour (Ref. Report on the Assessment of the JWG Operations) were used again to assess progress made. Participants were told at the outset that their identity would remain confidential.

All interviews were conducted by two interviewers, i.e. two members of the Board Secretariat and for the tallymen, a member of the Secretariat and an outside consultant experienced in this type of consultation with tallymen in the Territory. In the latter case, local translators not involved in forestry files were hired to enable interviewees to express themselves in the language of their choice (Cree, English or French).

After the meetings, the interviewers prepared a summary of participants' responses to allow information from the three different groups (tallymen, JWG members and their coordinators, TSFMA holders) to be collated according to the Agreement's main themes. This information is presented in Appendix 2 of the complete status report of the assessment.

3.2 Review of Findings by Main Agreement Theme

The following is a list of the highlights mentioned by the stakeholders met with during the tour. These elements are grouped by the main Agreement themes discussed in the interview.

The Technical Modalities of the Agreement and its Sdapted Forestry Regime

With regard to the Agreement's modalities, the survey began with questions on forested areas presenting wildlife interest for the Cree. This modality, which stakeholders refer to as the 25%, is omnipresent in everyone's comments.



Many tallymen were confused, saying that they basically believed that these areas would be protected from all forestry activities. They said that this had influenced the process they used to site these sectors. Many tallymen see no difference in the harvesting method used for these areas compared to the method used on the trapline as a whole. They are dismayed, fearing that they have contributed to forestry activity planning in sectors they wanted to protect more than anything.

TSFMA holders also reported initial confusion on the part of the tallymen regarding the 25% but they see that this has now been corrected.

They pointed out that the management requirements in these areas are such that they have only very little leeway to propose harmonization measures in other sectors.

On the other hand, the majority of tallymen interviewed felt that the type of management planned for the 25% will not protect wildlife habitats or Cree use of the Territory.

JWG members pointed out that the tallymen are not well acquainted with the adapted forestry regime's objectives and modalities and that it is difficult to optimize their contribution in this area. The tallymen feel that they have not been adequately informed about the Agreement.

TSFMA holders raised the different interpretations of the Agreement's modalities by the five JWGs, which results in a lack of decision-making consistency from one JWG to another. JWG members decry the absence of a data base common to all stakeholders six years after the signature of the ANRQC.

It is also worrisome to note that stakeholders have not fully adopted the tools created since the Agreement was signed. For example, JWG members and TSFMA holders stated that they did not really understand the evaluation criteria of FPDO #11 regarding the Agreement. They said they knew nothing, or very little, about the "planning-aid guide" and wildlife habitat protection and development directive project, tools which they said arrived too late to use in the planning process.

Finally, when asked about monitoring measures, many tallymen deem them insufficient; they see offences in the field but feel powerless to act alone. JWG members deplore the fact that they are not informed about permit issuing, not involved in monitoring, receive no results from the MRNF to this effect and that the harmonization measures TSFMA holders and tallymen agree to are not subject to follow-up or monitoring.

Agreement Stakeholders

Because recognition of stakeholders' roles and interdependence is a key element in collaboration, we asked questions in this regard.

Many tallymen do not recognize JWG to be a joint Cree-Québec structure, saying that they feel that Québec members dominate Cree members when their requests are discussed. Other tallymen confuse JWG Québec members with TSFMA holders. On the whole, tallymen would like to have more support from JWG members.

We asked JWG members how they see their role and were told that there is no clear, uniform definition of their role or responsibilities. They note that, vis-à-vis the other stakeholders, this situation causes ambiguity as to their real power.

JWG members said that they are accountable to no-one and that they lack support, especially from the coordinators. They are unhappy about the lack of training offered despite repeated requests to the authorities. Finally, JWG Cree members deem their financing and available resources to be insufficient.

TSFMA holders are pleased with the facilitating role played by the JWGs but note that they often do not operate as a cohesive group, but rather a committee composed of two opposing groups.

TSFMA holders' opinions diverge since many would like to delegate the consultation process to the JWGs to lighten their workload while others absolutely insist on being involved in procedures to better understand and meet the Crees' needs.

Almost no tallymen know that the CQFB exists. JWG members and TSFMA holders know that it exists but know little about its mandate and actions. They would like to have more direct contact with this entity.

Consultation and Participation Mechanisms

One of the main objectives of Chapter 3 and Schedule C of the ANRQC is to enable the Cree to participate in the different forest management activity planning and management processes. The interviews focussed on and often diverged on this aspect, which represents a collective challenge for stakeholders. Discussions raised various elements.

First, almost all tallymen that were interviewed preferred meeting with a TSFMA holder's representative during consultations. They prefer discussing the field reality directly with the TSFMA holder rather than via a JWG member. JWG members agree.

Tallymen do not like group meetings (several tallymen paired up) since they restrict their ability to express themselves fully and do not allow for direct dialogue between stakeholders.

On the whole, JWG members report major communication (language and cultural) problems at consultation meetings.

Some tallymen also feel that participation tools should be more complete, up-to-date and better adapted. They also think the meetings should be better documented.

To optimize their participation, the tallymen suggested organizing more meetings to ensure continuity and proposed setting up a meeting calendar that better takes traditional Cree activities into account and allows time for reflection, consultation of the other users and feedback to TSFMA holders in the field.



JWGs often agree. Among other things, they suggested meeting with tallymen in their camps, avoiding consultation sessions during traditional holiday periods, standardizing the content of the maps used in consultations and incorporating planning-support maps into consultations. To enhance mutual understanding among stakeholders, they also proposed expressing stakes in layman's terms, broadening consultations to include other Cree users of the Territory, encouraging better feedback on requests made during consultations and planning for sufficiently long meetings. They also added that the meeting calendar should be respected more strictly.

The majority of TSFMA holders expressed satisfaction with the way consultation meetings were held and the JWGs' role in them. They disagree with tallymen, saying they wanted a limited number of meetings. Many noted that, when there are more meetings, tallymen too often ask for harmonization measures that are unrelated to forestry activities. They also have the impression that they are doing the same work twice and opening the door to having trappers change their mind on measures that have already undergone consultation.

Many tallymen interviewed during the consultation tour replied by denouncing the many annual modifications TSFMA holders make to plans, saying that they are a source of confusion and disturbance for the more active trappers, who plan their activities ahead of time. These tallymen do not understand why the Cree cannot also change their mind about how forestry should be carried out in the Territory.

JWG members summarize, citing generalized uncertainty as to what constitutes a harmonization measure and stating that this creates unhealthy misunderstanding between stakeholders in the participation process.

All three stakeholder groups were unanimous with regard to significant participation by the Cree, saying that the current process is more a consultation process; some even said an information-process, rather than a participation process. For example, some tallymen feel that their role consists in approving plans and that they do not really have the power to influence them.



Many JWG members also feel that meetings are more informational than participatory. Most deem tallymen to have little influence since planning is virtually finished before the consultation process begins. TSFMA holders say that the consultations are often only used to exchange information between the parties. Few TSFMA holders specifically spoke of their obligation to agree on the positioning of residual forests, forest roads and harmonization measures.

One might have thought that the GFMP development process, which provides for upstream participation, and the advent of planning-support maps, a tool designed to optimize the tallymen's participation in this process, would have made a significant difference. But, overridingly, JWG members and TSFMA holders felt that the tool was available too late in the process to have an influence.

In this regard, stakeholders added certain contextual elements, i.e. initially the ANRQC provided for implementation of all of the provisions of Schedule C-4 on plan preparation and approval in the context of the coming into effect of a new generation of GFMPs in 2005. However, in 2004, Québec announced that various aspects of forest management province-wide had to be reviewed and postponed the production of new GFMPs twice. Once, to allow review of annual allowable cut calculations and, again, to reflect the work of the Coulombe Commission.

Although the parties reached an agreement in the context of amendments to the Agreement, these delays resulted in downtime for all stakeholders. Successive postponements slowed initiatives to implement plan development provisions. Activities were late starting up again and, consequently, plans were prepared within a shorter time frame, a fact that definitely did not help optimize Cree participation in forest management activity planning.

Where planning-support maps are concerned, tallymen voiced their frustration at realizing that their map was not considered or that their effort to document land use had resulted in no planning changes. However, planning-support map potential generally seems to be recognized by the three groups, which wish to see the maps updated.

Economic Benefits, Jobs and Contracts for the Cree

Two stakeholder groups discussed economic factors. First, many tallymen deplored not receiving their fair share of the royalties/financial compensation under the new model set up by the ANRQC. They deem elimination of direct compensation by companies to be to their disadvantage and consider that the financial assistance programs established by Cree authorities to replace them do not give back the same amounts.

Many tallymen also expressed their concern about employment. They hope to see users of the Territory and the Cree in general more involved in forestry-related jobs. However, they identified certain constraints: training and requirements (cards and degrees), which restrict Cree access to jobs; the fact that some Cree workers lack motivation to maintain their forestry-related job (intense, demanding work); lack of support from the authorities for Native business start-up initiatives; lack of promotion of forestry-related jobs to interest Native workers; and, finally, with the upswing of hydroelectric and mining projects, forest worker wages are less competitive.

TSFMA holders share the tallymen's opinion on most employment-related points. They agree that, given equal qualification and skills, local Cree workers would be given precedence. According to TSFMA holders, the major factors restricting Cree hiring are the lack of worker training, lack of supervision and, sometimes, lack of desire and motivation to work.

3.3 Overall Assessment

The stakeholders are generally satisfied with the Agreement. For the more general questions on the Agreement's implementation, the majority of Cree and non-Cree stakeholders recognized the efforts made by all and stressed the parties' goodwill. They defined this common will as a positive aspect making it possible to gradually build a relationship of trust and, ultimately, a viable partnership.

Most are satisfied with the new opportunities for meeting and discussion created by the Agreement and see them as an opportunity to explain their viewpoint and understand that of the other party. The tallymen also appreciate their increased involvement in the forestry planning process. JWG members feel that they contribute positively to the Agreement's implementation and TSFMA holders stress primarily the advantage of operating under a clear regime with clear mechanisms.

The stakeholders' general comments lead us to believe that the parties are committed, via the "Paix des braves", to a collaborative learning process focussing on the search for "win-win" solutions.

However, in response to more specific questions on the adapted forestry regime's particular modalities, stakeholders voiced some dissatisfaction and hope for improvement.

For example, some tallymen said they have observed no change yet in means of operating in the Territory. JWG members are unhappy about their lack of training in forestry techniques on one side and Cree culture on the other side. And, TSFMA holders complain about the very rigid normative context, which makes planning more complex and leaves little room for initiatives to harmonize silvicultural practices, and cite increased operating costs and decreased allowable cut since the Agreement was signed.

These comments are not necessarily contradictory but rather the expression of stakeholders' high expectations for the Agreement. It seems that while they do not question the Agreement's validity, they hope to see its application improve on an ongoing basis. Criticism also pointed to the fact that stakeholders want to be part of the solution, which certainly augurs well.

TSFMA holders nuanced this statement, pointing out that the parties did not really listen to them and that they had not been involved at all in designing the initial adapted forestry regime. In future, they consider it almost utopian to think that they will eventually contribute to the Agreement's evolution but they continue to hope.

4. Synthesis of Priority Issues and Recommendations

This assessment exercise reveals that multiple efforts were undertaken by the parties since the signing of the Agreement in order to reach its objectives. We observe that the concerned stakeholders are relatively satisfied with these efforts, generally speaking. However, looking at things more closely, the assessment reveals specific problematic elements that need to be addressed.

In this section, the Cree-Québec Forestry Board conducts an examination of these problematic elements and informs the parties of actions that can contribute to reaching the Agreement's objectives. The Board concentrates on priority elements it deems potential precursors to development.

Some of these elements are revealed in the detailed analysis, which shows partial or complete non-compliance with certain provisions, evidence that they have not yet attained their full potential.

For some other provisions deemed compliant or applied, the Board saw some inconsistencies between certain provisions and their assessments. While the detailed analysis may show that a provision is applied or respected—initially positive—the stakeholders' point of view may show that this same provision generates discontent or that its application needs to be reinforced.

To orient the parties in their future actions aimed at implementing and helping the ANRQC's adapted forestry regime to evolve, this section is based on integrating the findings of the detailed analysis and tour in order to propose a list of priorities and related recommendations.

The analysis leads to the identification of five priorities that are explained in the following paragraphs:

- Joint Working Group (JWG) governance;
- Elaboration, consultation and approval of forest management plans;
- Tallymen's contribution;
- Monitoring of Agreement's implementation (modalities and objectives);
- Common access to basic information.

These priorities are accompanied by overall recommendations, defining the essence of the means to implement. More specific avenues for action for each priority are shown in Appendix 3 of the complete status report of the assessment for the parties' benefit. In concluding, we propose an additional recommendation to ensure follow-up to these priorities:

- Setting up a parties' working group

4.1 Joint Working Group Governance

The Joint Working Groups are critical for the Agreement's implementation. It is mainly through the ongoing work of the five communities' JWG members that a new relation between the Cree and Québec can be built.

To ensure coherence and guide the actions of these groups, the Board evaluated JWG functioning in 2005. This study resulted in a series of recommendations whose implementation has been minimal at best.

The present status report contains the same findings as in 2005 in terms of lack of training, supervision, support, resources and funding. The approach then proposed, i.e. strengthening the role of the JWG coordinators, can definitely not change the complete situation on its own.

Our analysis suggests that there is a problem of governance linked to the ambiguity of JWG accountability, stemming, in part, from the fact that the Agreement signatories did not want to identify people in charge of the JWG as such or define their ties of accountability. As a result, each party interprets supervision of its members as it wishes.

On the Québec side, we note more cohesion since all members come from the MRNF. This affiliation however generates questions among many stakeholders as to their potential to act freely within the JWG when Agreement files involve this Department, and to commit themselves 100% to their JWG mandate.

On the Cree side, there seems to be more independence among JWG members but, at the same time, we see a paradox. While Cree JWG members jealously guard their freedom of action, they also seek greater support from their authorities and their counterparts. Most of the stakeholders interviewed decry Cree members' lack of training on the Agreement and forestry in general.

We believe that until JWG accountability is clarified, it will be difficult for Cree and Québec members to develop the organizations' full potential and work toward a common cause.

For example, despite the scope of the mandates assigned to the JWGs under the ANRQC, the task of the JWG members by March 31, 2008 was still limited to facilitating a consultation process targeting forest management plan approval. The other dimensions, such as joint establishment of harmonization measures, joint analysis of land-use conflicts with a view to proposing solutions or joint identification of further technical knowledge required, still remain to be fully explored.

We hope the parties can use this assessment exercise to compare the role actually played by the JWCs with their potential for implementing the Agreement.

Recommendation 1

Mandate a joint task force to assess the different aspects of JWC governance and, if the parties agree, propose adjustments in this regard.

4.2 Elaboration, Consultation and Approval of Forest Management Plans

The adapted forestry regime applied on the Agreement Territory has specific provisions for forest management plan elaboration, consultation and approval processes. The Québec Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife is responsible for defining the directives to get these processes under way when a new planning exercise is launched, for verifying compliance with these directives and for providing the inputs required through the processes.

After the Agreement was signed, the forestry-related planning process was implemented in keeping with the transitory measures of Schedule C4, as envisaged, over a horizon designed to replace the regular mechanisms as of 2005. This period of transitional measures was extended an additional three years, until 2008, for the reasons mentioned in this report.

The forest management plan elaboration, consultation and approval process finally took tangible form in the 2008-2013 GFMP preparation exercise. Preparing these general forest management plans put all of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions to the test.

Our analysis shows that for the 2008-2013 GFMPs, it was not the provisions that were the problem but the availability of directives and inputs to implement the process at the right time. Not only did the joint GFMP elaboration process begin late, the resulting processes were carried out in a difficult context and an overly short period of time.

The assessment's main finding in this regard is stakeholder consensus on the importance of getting clear directives and inputs at the right time in order to optimize the forest management plan elaboration, consultation and approval processes. All stakeholders wish to see more rigour on this point in the future.

Recommendation 2

Ensure that the Agreement development, consultation and approval process for forest management plans is clearly interpreted, better timed and consistently implemented.

4.3 Tallymen's Contribution

The Cree tallymen play a prominent role in the implementation of the Agreement's adapted forestry regime. In keeping with the Cree culture, the Agreement entrusts the tallymen with a stewardship role for family hunting grounds and, as a result, many responsibilities.

Among other things, each tallyman is responsible for defining sites of interest, contributing to identify residual stands to be preserved in cutting sectors, agreeing on harmonization measures and pointing out any other concern to consider in the forest management plan preparation process.

Since the Agreement was signed, few formal initiatives have targeted informing the tallymen about the adapted forestry regime and their role with regard to it. Our survey showed that the tallymen do not clearly understand the Agreement's objectives, implementation mechanisms (JWGs and CQFB), modalities (mainly the goal and status of protecting sites of wildlife interest), forest management planning processes, decision-making tools (including the planning-support map) and, consequently, their own role in the Agreement's processes.

Even if a majority of tallymen express a good level of satisfaction with the Agreement, generally speaking, they feel they have made a better contribution to planning since the onset of the adapted forestry regime. However, they continue to hope that processes and modalities will improve.

The tour also showed that certain aspects of the adapted forestry regime caused dissatisfaction among many tallymen, who generally feel that they are "informed" rather than "consulted", they consider they do not have insufficient influence on planning; do not really notice a difference in the field between harvesting on sites of wildlife interest compared to the rest of the trapline.

To optimize tallymen's contribution to the adapted forestry regime's implementation, we must ensure that they understand their roles and the mechanisms and are satisfied with their application. There is clearly also a need for consolidating relations between tallymen and planners.

Recommendation 3

Strengthen tallymen's contribution to the forest management planning process.

4.4 Monitoring of Agreement's Implementation (Modalities and Objectives)

Implementation of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions involves two types of monitoring. The first concerns all forms of technical follow-up stipulated in the ANRQC designed to evaluate compliance with the adapted forestry regime's modalities in carrying out the various forest management plans.

With regard to the adapted forestry regime's modalities, the assessment shows that only the MRNF monitors the modalities and the plans according to its own forest- and environment-related criteria. The results of this monitoring are not shared with Agreement stakeholders. The JwGs have never been involved in monitoring or establishing parameters to this effect, despite the fact that the Agreement gives them such responsibilities.

Recommendation 4

Strengthen JwG members' intervention capacity so they can contribute, within their mandate, to the monitoring of the modalities of the adapted forestry regime.

The second type of monitoring concerns attainment of the adapted forestry regime's objectives. It should evaluate whether the Agreement's implementation makes it possible to increasingly take into account the Cree traditional way of life, better integrate concerns relating to sustainable development, and enhance the Crees' participation in the various forest activities operations planning and management processes.

With regard to this second type, the assessment shows that no stakeholder group currently measures attainment of these objectives or studies the provisions of the adapted forestry regime from the viewpoint of whether they are likely to promote their attainment.

While the Agreement's early years focussed on its implementation, the time has come to accord greater importance to assessing actions taken and attainment of target objectives.

In keeping with the principle of adaptive management and the Agreement's sustainable development imperatives, we probably need to adopt criteria other than biophysical forest-related criteria in monitoring the adapted forestry regime. By this, we mean the possibility of introducing economic, wildlife-related, and social criteria in addition to others.

Recommendation 5

Jointly establish the monitoring systems required to measure attainment of the objectives of Chapter 3 of the Agreement.

4.5 Common Access to Basic Information

The Agreement's implementation involves a range of information and technical data that is updated on an ongoing basis and taken from many sources. This basic information can take the form of maps, numeric data, statistics, plans, permits, reports, minutes, letters, notices, resolutions, legal texts, etc.

In the context of the present assessment, stakeholders repeatedly raised obstacles linked to accessing this information, expressing the desire to be able to refer to something of a single window to ensure that everyone is using the same basic information so as to facilitate discussion.

To promote mutual understanding and trust among stakeholders, the parties must agree on the best way to ensure that basic information is available.

Recommendation 6

Ensure that Agreement stakeholders have permanent access to a common, updated data bank.

4.6 Setting up of a Parties' Task Force

The priorities and recommendations to the parties result from a major data collection and analysis exercise regarding implementation of the ANRQC's forestry-related provisions.

To ensure proper follow-up to this status report, it is important that the parties go beyond the overall recommendations and study the entire report's contents in depth to define action priorities.

We deem that far-reaching deliberation must begin in the context of a joint initiative by the parties to pursue ongoing improvement of the Paix des braves' implementation.

A parties' task force could draw inspiration from the avenues for action proposed in Appendix 3 of the complete status report of the assessment.

Recommendation 7

Set up a parties' task force mandated to follow up on the priority issues and recommendations as soon as possible.

5. Conclusion

Six years after the signing of the Paix des braves, assessment of Chapter 3 of the Agreement has been instrumental in taking stock of the implementation of forestry-related provisions and on stakeholders' satisfaction regarding said implementation. On the whole, the result is positive.

All parties showed flexibility and initiative in implementing the large majority of the forestry related provisions of the Agreement. In addition, stakeholders say they are mostly satisfied with the efforts all displayed, even if there still exist some misunderstandings about how certain processes and modalities of the adapted forestry regime are carried out.

In this regard, the ANRQC signatories' intent was that the adapted forestry regime be dynamic and open to change. We have thus identified, for the benefit of the parties, a series of issues emerging from the assessment along with recommendations and suggested action proposals. Among others, it is recommended to set up a parties' task force to follow up on the assessment as soon as possible.

The information set out in the report has also become strategic in the context of the Quebec Forest Regime Reform. That is to say that the data gathered will help the Board and the parties analyze the new proposed regime with relation to the objectives of the Agreement and in consideration of the experience gained through the implementation exercise.

In short, Chapter 3 of the ANRQC was found to be an ongoing collaborative learning experience for all stakeholders engaged in its implementation. In light of the findings of this first assessment, we can consider the possibility of carrying on successfully said implementation since the parties have been building on a solid basis and becoming more and more adept at mastering sharing and solution-seeking in this cross-cultural environment.

From a forestry standpoint, we can thus conclude that the “new relationship” between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Cree of Québec is characterized by cooperation, partnership and mutual respect.



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