

STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FORESTRY-RELATED PROVISIONS 2008-2013

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Paix des Braves Adapted Forestry Regime

The Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec (ANRQC), commonly called the Paix des Braves, contains a chapter on forestry (Chapter 3), whose provisions implement an Adapted Forestry Regime. This Regime defines the 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 in forest management planning and development activities.

Cree-Québec Forestry Board Mandate

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB) was created under the Paix des Braves to monitor, report on and assess the implementation of Chapter 3 (Forestry) of the Agreement. This summary document provides a status report on the results of the second assessment of the Adapted Forestry Regime's implementation conducted by the Board for the period 2008-2013.



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Assessment Approach

The 2008-2013 assessment was conducted in continuity with its predecessor for the period 2002-2008. This second assessment is also based on a two-tiered approach: a detailed analysis and an analysis of stakeholder points of view.

1 The detailed analysis consisted in a clause-by-clause assessment of the implementation of the forestry-related provisions of Chapter 3 and Schedule C of the Agreement. For the 2008-2013 exercise, the Board Secretariat and party representatives updated the evaluation grid produced for the 2002-2008 assessment, and were able to assess the progress made in implementing the Agreement.

2 The analysis of stakeholder points of view validated and rounded out some of the preliminary findings of the detailed analysis, identifying the main issues at stake in the Adapted Forestry Regime's implementation. For this component, the Board Secretariat conducted 63 interviews of the frontline stakeholders involved in the Agreement's implementation (Cree tallymen, Joint Working Group (JWG) members and coordinators, Board members, the parties' technical advisors and forest-industry representatives). The interview content was analyzed by the Board Secretariat in conjunction with Québec and Cree representatives.

Forestry Regime Consolidation and Increased Stakeholder Involvement

The assessment highlighted primarily the fact that the Adapted Forestry Regime was consolidated in 2008-2013. Over the preceding period, 2002-2008, a series of transitional measures had been implemented, resulting in a forestry-related planning cycle for 2008-2013. The "breaking-in" linked to this transitional period is now finished. In 2008-2013, the stakeholders witnessed the systematic implementation of almost all of the Adapted Forestry Regime's technical provisions.

The various stakeholders have a better understanding of the Adapted Forestry Regime and the role each of them plays in its implementation process. Better relations have been observed between the Cree stakeholders, Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec (MFFP) representatives and forest-industry players.

Analysis of the assessment shows that particular attention was given to ensuring that those in charge of the Adapted Forestry Regime's implementation were able to develop forest management plans and that the Crees were consulted increasingly in this context. In this regard, the party representatives stated that they are committed to a 'continuous improvement' approach.

The Crees are playing a more active role. They are being consulted more, and their participation has improved. Cree involvement is perceived as one of the main advantages of the Adapted Forestry Regime.

The JVGs, composed of members representing the MFFP and members representing the Cree communities, are more involved in the consultation mechanisms. Having worked in stable teams for several years now, they have acquired a great deal of experience. They also have a better understanding of the Regime's implementation. To improve their organization and communications, they have developed their own mechanisms, which have stood the test of time, proving particularly effective with the tallymen.

The JWG coordinators gradually took their rightful place in 2008-2013. They were able to better supervise the JWG members and set up more fluid links between them. They also played an active role in everyday conflict resolution.

The Cree tallymen now have more experience with the Adapted Forestry Regime and have noticed that the approach and cutting methods have made forestry less damaging to wildlife, compared to the methods used before the Paix des Braves. They also appreciate the maximum harvesting thresholds and rates (speed), which tend to better take their traditional activities into account. While they stated that they are being consulted more, they would like to have more influence, especially as concerns road access and planning in this regard.

The forestry-industry representatives appreciate the clarity in the Adapted Forestry Regime's application, which gives them stability with respect to their timber supply requirements.





Emerging Issues to Take into Account

The Board and party collaborators have integrated the findings of the detailed analysis, the viewpoints expressed by the various stakeholders and elements linked to the context governing the period 2008-2013. They have identified three main priorities, which must be taken into account for the positive results noted in the 2008-2013 assessment to continue in the coming years and for the Paix des Braves' forestry-related objectives to be achieved.

Strengthen collaboration between those in charge of the implementation of Chapter 3 of the Agreement

These stakeholders (JWGs and their coordinators, Board members) expressed the desire to strengthen the implementation's joint aspect. To do so, they must continue to intensify their collaboration and optimize their roles so as to be complementary and effective. Their actions must target continuous improvement of the Regime's implementation and everyday problem and conflict resolution. The role of the JWG coordinators must be formalized (non-existent position in the original agreement) and the JWGs' involvement increased. The assessment showed that it is important for the tallymen to continue to be well-informed through their Adapted Forestry Regime experience. It is hoped that the Board will play an active role in strengthening this collaboration. Finally, the Crees feel that their capacities must increase so that they can get involved even more in forest activity management planning and development.

Set up adaptive management based on assessment and evolution of the Adapted Forestry Regime

The difficulty with respect to the Adapted Forestry Regime's evolution was expressed through the assessment and based on certain highlights. Specific provisions, concerning wildlife habitats, mixed stands and alternative treatments, have not really been implemented. Others need to be assessed: they are related to forested areas of interest to wildlife (the "25%"), riparian buffers, harvesting thresholds and rates (speed) and mosaic cutting (to be considered under ecosystem-based management and woodland caribou protection imperatives).

The parties are very interested in exploring the Regime and helping it evolve on a 'continuous improvement' basis. This evolution is desired in order to promote sustainable forest management in the Territory, while recognizing the parties' mutual needs. The parties agree that a real adaptive management process is based on ongoing assessment of Chapter 3's implementation, understanding the issues and working together to develop solutions.

Greater concern for the economic component

The assessment showed the importance that the provisions related to jobs and contracts for the Crees (stipulated in Chapter 3) be implemented properly and have concrete results. This issue speaks to the context surrounding the Cree nation's accountability with regard to its economic development.

For the provisions governing access to forest resources, the economic spinoff objectives must be better defined so that the Crees can benefit more from the volumes reserved for them.

From the viewpoint of the Adapted Forestry Regime's evolution, it is hoped that the economic criteria will be increasingly taken into account in evaluating opportunities to take.



Follow-up

An action plan has been developed and implemented to ensure follow-up and monitoring of the main issues. It calls for the involvement of the stakeholders concerned. The Board will monitor the action plan.

The Board has developed an interactive tool to assess the implementation of Chapter 3 on an ongoing basis. This monitoring framework should make it possible to deal with problems and needs for the Adapted Forestry Regime to evolve when they arise. Without waiting for the end of the five-year period, possible avenues for action could be proposed.

Further information on the 2008-2013 assessment framework and the Board's monitoring framework are available on the Board's website.

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