Capacity For What?
Capacity For Whom?
Aboriginal Capacity and Canada's Forest Sector

By Marc G. Stevenson and Pamela Perreault

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Dedication

This paper is dedicated to the memories of Tony Mercredi and Sam Shirt, true champions of First Nations rights and cultures who guided many SFM Network researchers, students, partners and staff on their journeys of self-discovery and social responsibility.

Acknowledgements

Preface

The subject of Aboriginal capacity and capacity building initiatives within the Canadian forest sector and around the world is multi-faceted, and open to many different interpretations, including those of the authors. The original intention of the project that resulted in this paper was to document three perspectives on the issue of capacity building in forest management — that of government, First Nations and the forest industry. In the interest of time and resources we limited our efforts to documenting multiple approaches to Aboriginal capacity building in the forest sector.

The views represented in this paper are by no means exhaustive and our efforts to summarize and analyze the current situation have been influenced by the authors' perspectives which have evolved from literature reviews, personal interviews, focus group sessions and conferences. Our hope is to provide fodder for a much wider discussion of Aboriginal capacity building in the forest and natural resource development sectors. We would encourage serious reflection on the discussion points and recommendations raised in this report, and hope to continue to participate in a constructive dialogue that will lead to significant structural reform and the reconciliation of Aboriginal rights and interests with those of other Canadians.

Executive Summary

- Aboriginal capacity building has emerged as the key issue and priority for many First Nations and Aboriginal communities. Although it may not yet have achieved the same status within industry and government circles, it is on their "radar screens"; both have attempted to address Aboriginal capacity building with whatever resources and political will they can muster.

- With forestry taking place on their traditional territories, many Aboriginal communities view the forest sector as a means to economic self-sufficiency, and a way to break the shackles of welfare and dependency. However, a lack of "capacity" among Aboriginal peoples is most often cited as the key barrier impeding the flow of benefits from forestry and natural resource development to Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

- A focus has thus emerged on providing Aboriginal peoples with the education, training and skills to capture employment and business opportunities in forestry and the natural resource development sectors. This approach, which we refer to as the "capacity deficit model," continues to drive virtually all government and industry, and even some Aboriginal, approaches to capacity building.

- For the most part, these initiatives have failed to improve the economic and social well-being of forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities. Given the current state of affairs in Canada's forestry sector, we must ask whether commercial forestry is an appropriate foundation upon which to build sustainable Aboriginal communities. Capacity building initiatives aimed exclusively at increasing Aboriginal participation in commercial forestry sector may, in fact, be setting up Aboriginal peoples and communities for failure, disappointment and ultimately greater dependency.

- Nevertheless, the mobilization of Aboriginal peoples in natural resource development is becoming the mantra of governments, academia, Aboriginal organizations and the natural resource development sector. Economic solutions to the many problems plaguing Aboriginal forest-dependent communities (poverty, high unemployment, high welfare dependency, etc.) are sought and seen as the most proximate route to empowering Aboriginal peoples.

- Aboriginal peoples tend to view the issue of "capacity" as a two-way street. The capacities required to develop sustainable economic and ecological relationships with forested lands and resources is not specific to Aboriginal peoples, but also a requirement for non-Aboriginal governments and industries. Frequently, however, forest companies, provincial governments and other non-Aboriginal interests view their capacity needs and strengths, as well as those of Aboriginal peoples, within the constellation of existing economic, technical, social and political relationships, institutions and systems. These views underpin and give momentum to the "capacity deficit model." While such approaches may suffice to meet mutual interests over the short-term, they ill prepare practitioners and policy makers with the necessary skill sets and professional competency to effectively address existing and emerging social, economic, cultural, and political realities in rural Aboriginal communities.

Aboriginal capacity building is a priority issue.

The "capacity deficit model" continues to drive most capacity building approaches.

Is commercial forestry an appropriate foundation upon which to build sustainable Aboriginal communities?

Capacity building is also needed for non-Aboriginal governments and industries.

The "capacity deficit model" does not prepare practitioners with the skill sets to effectively address issues in rural Aboriginal communities.

• A more thorough, reflective and grounded answer to the question "Capacity for What?" begins with a review and analysis of government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity building programs relevant to the forest and natural resource development sectors. It also begins with an examination of Aboriginal-led initiatives addressing the issue of capacity-building in forest sector.

• The greatest successes of government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity building programs are experienced in gains in individual skill sets that further personal aspirations of economic self-sufficiency. Yet, they have not resulted in significant changes to the way that forestry or other natural resource developments are conducted on traditional lands. "Capacity deficit" and "top down" approaches to Aboriginal capacity building can, and must be seen, to be only part of the solution. "Bottom-up" approaches, which put Aboriginal communities at the centre of determining their capacity needs, are needed.

• Examination of four specific cases where First Nations have attempted to create meaningful employment for their members in the forest sector through a variety of capacity building initiatives reveal that the "operation was a success, but the patient died." These First Nations derived very few benefits from their engagement in commercial forestry. Common themes that emerge from these case studies relate to issues of "cultural fit" and the uncertainty of political and economic forces with respect to the security and sustainability of Aboriginal communities and economies.

• Case studies and a review of existing programs inform the development of a more comprehensive approach to building capacity in forest/natural resource-dependent Aboriginal communities. This approach considers the issue from multiple perspectives, scales and dimensions, all of which must be integrated into a broader, more comprehensive approach to building the capacity of Aboriginal peoples and communities. Theoretically grounded in a growing body of literature on Aboriginal and indigenous empowerment where local communities drive the design and delivery of capacity building programs, this approach builds on and situates existing Aboriginal capacity building initiatives within a conceptual framework that allows Aboriginal peoples to become true architects of their future.

• Specifically, "top down" approaches to Aboriginal capacity building must be met with "bottom up" approaches to achieve synergies and mutual aspirations for improving the lives of Aboriginal peoples in forest-dependent communities and conserving the cultural and biological diversity of our forests. Greater support of existing Aboriginal capacity building programs is needed in order for Aboriginal peoples to effectively engage in existing employment and business opportunities and address other challenges over the short-term. However, this must be met with the creation of new institutional approaches to building capacity in Aboriginal communities that supports their efforts to plan and realize a sustainable future from their lands and resources based on their goals and priorities.

- By way of achieving these objectives it is recommended that:

  1) Aboriginal peoples, communities and governments take ownership of the processes of determining their capacity needs and requirements, and of implementing their existing capacity strengths.

  2) Resourcing for existing government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity and infrastructure building programs relating to forestry and natural resource development be increased substantially.

  3) A new government-funded Aboriginal capacity building initiative be created to provide funding and administrative support to forest-dependent Aboriginal communities and governments to undertake the community-driven research, planning and visioning exercises necessary to achieve sustainability.

  4) An Aboriginal Natural Resources Research and Policy Institute be created to provide the balanced research and policy analyses needed to inform the development and implementation of new Aboriginal capacity initiatives. This would include the development of new institutional arrangements that provide Aboriginal peoples and communities with greater access to their lands and resources.

  5) Industry and government assess their capacity strengths and weaknesses to accommodate Aboriginal needs, rights and interests in the context of natural resource development and sustainable land-use planning and management, and, where appropriate, undertake measures to address capacity deficiencies.

  6) Relevant post-secondary educational institutions re-design and develop programs and courses that create the space for the equitable and meaningful participation of Aboriginal peoples and communities in the forest/natural resource development and management sectors.

- No longer can or should the issue of Aboriginal capacity be approached in a piece-meal manner. And, no longer is it appropriate to speak of "capacity" — a term rejected by a growing number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples — without asking:

  Capacity for What? Capacity for Whom?

1.0 Framing the Issue

In response to the settlement of land claims, court decisions clarifying the scope of Aboriginal and treaty rights, social and economic problems plaguing many Aboriginal communities, and other drivers, capacity building has emerged as the key priority for many Aboriginal communities.[1] Although Aboriginal capacity building may not have achieved the same status or urgency within industry and federal/provincial/territorial government circles, it is on their "radar screens"; both have attempted to address Aboriginal capacity building with whatever resources, means and political will they can access.

Various governments, national Aboriginal organizations, federal commissions and senate committees agree that Canada's Aboriginal peoples have not received their fair share of benefits from forestry and other natural resource extractions on their traditional lands.[2] At the same time, most federal, provincial and territorial agencies now recognize that no major natural resource developments or conservation decisions can be made in Canada's forests without significant Aboriginal support (NTREE 2005:44). Yet, as currently conceived, regulated and practiced, forestry and other natural resource developments have simply not improved the lives of Aboriginal peoples and communities to the extent envisioned by many government, industry and Aboriginal interests. In fact, natural resource extraction is beginning to be viewed by some Aboriginal peoples as more a curse than an opportunity.[3]

Capacity for Whom?
The promise of jobs is often used by government and industry to gain access to lands and resources where Aboriginal peoples claim rights and interests. However, a lack of "capacity" among Aboriginal peoples is most often cited as the key barrier limiting the flow of benefits from resource developments on Aboriginal lands to Aboriginal peoples (NTREE 2005, RCAP 1996). As the prevailing ideology goes, if only Aboriginal peoples had the education, training and skills, (i.e., "capacity") to participate in forestry and natural resource extraction, planning and management, they could rise above their social and economic problems and become productive members of Canadian society. This thinking is perpetuated and reinforced, not only by existing government-sponsored capacity building initiatives, but by the economic development corporations and adult education arms of many Aboriginal governments and organizations.

Aboriginal peoples also look to opportunities associated with natural resource development and management as a way to improve economic and social conditions within their communities and to accommodate and exercise their constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights. The focus is on capturing employment and business opportunities in forestry and the natural resource development sectors in

Natural resource extraction is beginning to be viewed by Aboriginal peoples as more a curse than an opportunity.

A lack of "capacity" among Aboriginal peoples is most often cited as the key barrier to gain access to land and resources.

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[1] Aboriginal community is used here to include forest-dependent First Nations and Métis communities. In many respects, however, the discussion is also relevant to off-reserve and urban First Nations communities as well as Inuit communities. Community does not necessarily denote a group of people living together at the same location, but refers to a group of people bound together by a number of common features that may include geography, history, culture, values, kinship, political orientation, and so on.

[2] For example: http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/newrelationship/down/new_relationship.pdf; *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996); *Boreal Futures: Governance, Conservation and Development in Canada's Boreal*, National Round Table on the Environment and Economy (2005); *A First Nations-Federal Crown Political Accord on the Recognition and Implementation of First Nations Governments* (2005); Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples (2007), *Sharing Canada's Prosperity: A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out:* Final Report, Special Study on the Involvement of Aboriginal Communities and Businesses in Economic Development Opportunities in Canada, March 2007.

[3] G. Gibson and J. Klinck (2004), Canada's Resilient North: The Impact of Mining on Aboriginal Communities. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health* 3(1): 116-140.

order to improve the lives of Aboriginal peoples, and education, training and skills development in a variety of fields, ranging from resource extraction operations to resource management planning, is seen as the solution.

This approach, which we refer to as the "**capacity deficit model**," continues to drive virtually all government and industry, and even some Aboriginal approaches to capacity building.[4] While some of these initiatives have achieved a level of success, improvements to the economic and social well-being of forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities have been limited, failing to achieve the results anticipated. Unemployment, poverty and welfare dependency rates in most forest dependent Aboriginal communities remain unacceptably high and are many times the national average. Indeed, recent analysis reveal that Aboriginal communities in forested environments remain significantly poorer off than those in non-forested environments (Gysbers and Lee 2003).[5]

The existing state of affairs in Canada's forestry sector is tenuous. Fluctuations in commodity prices, parity in the Canadian/US dollar, increasing international competition, impending decreases in timber supply due to mountain pine beetle and fire kill, international trade disputes, pulp mill and sawmill closures, corporate mergers and consolidation of milling operations force us to reconsider whether commercial forestry is an appropriate foundation upon which to build sustainable Aboriginal communities. The fact is, that conventional forestry may have little to offer the long-term economic, social and cultural sustainability of forest-dependent Aboriginal communities. This is especially true in the northern boreal where current prospects for viable commercial forestry operations are marginal at best. Capacity building initiatives aimed exclusively at increasing Aboriginal participation in the commercial forest sector may, in fact, be setting up Aboriginal peoples and communities for failure, disappointment and ultimately greater dependency.

Canada's Aboriginal peoples, like the rest of the world, are being driven to development decisions about local resources that are valued on national and global economic scales. Often resource development decisions are taken in the absence of thorough understanding of their impacts on Aboriginal peoples and communities, who are left to face the consequences of development before, during and long after resource extraction ends. There are both rewards and penalties for those who venture into the resource extraction arena. For thousands of Aboriginal peoples the promise of "development" through resource extraction is weighed daily against the understanding that to act on the resource development opportunity may compromise their long-standing relationship with, and responsibilities to, lands and resources that have sustained them for generations. Nevertheless, the mobilization of Aboriginal peoples in natural resource development has become the mantra of governments, academia, Aboriginal organizations and the natural resource development sector. Economic solutions to the many social problems plaguing Aboriginal forest-dependent communities (poverty, high unemployment, high welfare dependency, etc.) are sought and seen as the most proximate route to empowering Aboriginal peoples.

Commercial forestry may not be an appropriate foundation upon which to build sustainable Aboriginal communities.

Often resource development decisions are taken in the absence of thorough understanding of their impacts on Aboriginal peoples and communities, who are left to face the consequences of development before, during and long after resource extraction ends.

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[4] *Aboriginal Forestry Training and Employment Review: Final Report, Executive Summary Phase I,* February (NAFA 1993).

[5] J.D. Gysbers and P. Lee (2003), *Aboriginal Communities in Forest Regions in Canada: Disparities in Socio-Economic Conditions.* Global Forest Watch, Edmonton, Alberta.

Based on a cross-section of interviews conducted for this paper by the authors, it is apparent that Aboriginal peoples view the issue of "capacity" as a two-way street. Industry and government need capacity too! Forest companies, provincial governments and other non-Aboriginal interests frequently view their capacity needs and strengths, as well as those of Aboriginal peoples, within existing economic, technical, social and political relationships, institutions and systems (e.g., provincial tenure and timber allocation systems; standard commercial operating procedures, etc.). These views give momentum to the "capacity deficit model." Such approaches ill prepare practitioners and policy makers with the necessary skill sets and professional competency to effectively address existing and emerging social, economic, cultural, and political realities in rural Aboriginal communities.

Numerous systemic barriers continue to confront forest companies and provincial governments as they attempt to keep Canada's forest sector competitive, while moving from sustained yield forestry to sustainable forest management. Foremost among these is the lack of existing capacity to manage effectively, given existing conditions, for the broad range and complex articulation of issues, values, needs, rights and interests that fundamentally comprise sustainable forest management. Many Aboriginal communities, governments and organizations subscribe to the belief that, in order to achieve and sustain their desired relationships with their forested lands, the capacity requirements of forest companies, governments and other non-Aboriginal parties cannot be ignored. Capacity to develop and sustain viable economic and ecological relationships with forested lands and resources is not specific to Aboriginal peoples. It is also a requirement for non-Aboriginal governments and industries, especially with respect to the design and implementation of institutions that recognize and accommodate Aboriginal needs, rights and interests, and create space for their knowledge, value and management systems.

Capacity for What?

A reflective and grounded answer to this question begins with a review and analysis of government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity building programs relevant to the forest and natural resource development sectors. While relevant programs are described briefly in Appendix A, the strengths and weaknesses of these programs, as well as Aboriginal responses and input into them, are discussed in Section 2.0.

Many Aboriginal Communities have attempted to create meaningful employment for their members in the forest sector, and/or to obtain a greater stake into how forestry is conducted on their traditional lands. In Appendix B we examine four cases — two in western Canada and two in the east: the Little Red River Cree Nation (AB), Tl'az'ten Nation (BC), the Innu Nation (NFLDL) and the Waswanipi Cree First Nation (QC). Common themes that emerge from these case studies relate to issues of "cultural fit" of commercial forestry employment and business operations, and the debilitating effects of internal political conflicts and external market forces on the long-term sustainability of Aboriginal communities and economies are discussed in Section 3.0.

These case studies and analysis of existing programs inform the development of a more comprehensive approach to building capacity in forest/natural resource-dependent Aboriginal communities in Section 4.0. This approach considers the issue from multiple perspectives, scales and dimensions, all of which must be integrated into a broader, more comprehensive approach to building the capacity of Aboriginal peoples and communities. This approach is theoretically grounded in a growing body of literature on Aboriginal and indigenous empowerment where local communities drive the design and delivery of capacity building programs.

Section 5.0 rationalizes the needs for: 1) greater support of existing Aboriginal capacity building programs in the forest and natural resource development sectors in order for Aboriginal peoples to effectively engage in existing employment and business opportunities and address challenges over the short-term, and 2) the creation of a new institutional approach to building capacity in Aboriginal communities that supports their efforts to plan and realize a sustainable future from their lands and resources based on their goals and priorities. While some of the systemic barriers that currently challenge this objective are described, a series of broad recommendations relevant to achieving it, and true reconciliation, are forwarded in the hope that they will find receptive audiences, first and foremost, among Canada's Aboriginal community, but also government and industry sectors. No longer can or should the issue of Aboriginal capacity be approached in a piece-meal manner. And, no longer is it appropriate to speak of "capacity" — a term rejected by a growing number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples — without asking:

<div align="center">Capacity for What? Capacity for Whom?</div>

2.0 Capacity Building Programs and Initiatives

There are numerous government-sponsored capacity building programs available to Aboriginal peoples to increase their abilities to participate in and benefit from the forest sector.[6] A brief description of some of the more commonly used ones is provided in Appendix A. This review is not exhaustive, but limited to those programs commonly accessed by Aboriginal peoples to support the building of their capacity to participate in forestry and natural resource development sectors. While themes common to most of these programs are identified, along with a number of considerations designed to improve their efficacy, this section focusses primarily on First Nation-driven efforts at the national level to inform and shape capacity building programs and initiatives.

It is important to point out that there exist no similar capacity programs for the Métis. In Canada, the federal government has, for the most part, defined and supported Aboriginal forestry activities according to a land-base (or geographical place) definition of "community" i.e. Indian Reserves. The Métis, with no delineated land base for the majority of their population, have not been able to access reserve-based economic development (i.e. training) programs that have traditionally supported Aboriginal forest development initiatives.[7] There is a need to further investigate the working definition of "Aboriginal community" within the context of contemporary forest development. Not only are many Aboriginal people living and working in forest-dependent communities not able to access critical funds, many skilled Métis people continue to be deprived of capacity-building opportunities.

National Efforts by Canada's Aboriginal Community to Build Capacity for the Forest Sector

Aboriginal Forestry Training Employment Review (AFTER)[8]

In 1993 the Aboriginal Forestry Training and Employment Review (AFTER) was initiated by the National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) with the expressed purpose of "establishing a process of consultation, research, assessment and planning, leading to the development of strategic approaches to Aboriginal human resource development in the forest sector." Not a funding program per se, AFTER was the first real attempt to develop comprehensive data on Aboriginal employment and overall participation in the forest sector. It was also intended to initiate an education and training strategy for Aboriginal peoples in forestry.

Over a five-year period, the AFTER Committee completed three comprehensive reports and developed awareness-building materials in order to expose Aboriginal students and community members to career opportunities and to address barriers to Aboriginal participation in the forest sector. The AFTER Committee found that less than 1% of Aboriginal students in post-secondary programs were enrolled in natural resource management, and, as a result, there were very few formerly

The Métis have not been able to access reserve-based economic development (i.e. training) programs that have traditionally supported Aboriginal forest development initiatives.

AFTER was the first real attempt to develop comprehensive data on Aboriginal employment and overall participation in the forest sector.

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[6] Forest sector refers to not just commercial forestry, but all uses of the forest which provide economic and other benefits to Canadians.

[7] An exception to this would be funding and support provided through Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements (AHRDA) — a Services Canada program delivered through Aboriginal Affairs and Aboriginal and Youth Employment Directorates to develop the employability of Aboriginal people and create meaningful job opportunities for Aboriginal Canadians wherever they may be — on reserve, or in rural or urban areas.

[8] NAFA (1993), *Aboriginal Forestry Training Employment Review, Final Report, Phase 1* http://www.nafaforestry.org/forest_home/documents/AFTER1-full.pdf

trained Aboriginal forest technicians and Aboriginal Registered Professional Foresters. Moreover, education and training programs for Aboriginal participation and involvement in curriculum development were lacking. A number of AFTER reports enabled NAFA to more effectively advocate and provide input into policy processes and sector wide studies such as those carried out by academic and research institutes, Parliamentary and Senate Committees and forest sector bodies.

The National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA)[9]

Capacity building has been an explicit objective of NAFA since its founding conference in 1989, which emphasized the importance of skills and human resource development coupled with governance arrangements at the community and regional levels. A broad consensus on traditional land use, non-timber values and Aboriginal cultural and spiritual ties with the land revealed that capacity building for Aboriginal forest management would need to be holistic and integrated. At one level NAFA views "capacity building" as a human resource issue pertaining to skill development and training at the level of the individual, recognizing that new approaches, at a community or regional level, would be needed for effective participation. On another level, NAFA views capacity building as broader than human resource development and is guided by:

- balanced and sustainable land care and development,
- a reliance on traditional knowledge,
- Aboriginal control and empowerment,
- accountable governance,
- best end use of forest resources,
- the exercise of Aboriginal and treaty rights, and
- Aboriginal networking as a means of information sharing.

In NAFA's view, **Aboriginal forest management capacity is dependent on the implementation of institutional arrangements that entrench and support these expressed values**. NAFA's "capacity building" initiatives have mainly addressed human resource development, skill development, education and training, and technical assistance. NAFA's activities have also included labour market and labour force analyses, and the monitoring of advancements in science and technologies with the intent of creating greater awareness of opportunities on the part of Aboriginal communities. In addition to AFTER (see above), NAFA's capacity building initiatives can be captured under the following four headings:

- Aboriginal professional development in the forest sector,
- Aboriginal forest land management guidelines,
- Workshops and "best practice" materials, and
- Aboriginal forest research.

NAFA's primary role regarding capacity-building has been to advocate for institutional change through policy research and development. The increased focus on the forest management capacity-building needs of Aboriginal communities is acknowledged and reflected in a number of national round table, senate committee and other national strategy reports.[10] In coming years, as the

NAFA emphasizes the importance of skills and human resource development coupled with governance arrangements at the community and regional levels.

NAFA's primary role regarding capacity-building has been to advocate for institutional change through policy research and development.

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[9] Extracted from H. Bombay (2007), NAFA's Aboriginal Capacity Building Initiatives.

[10] The Report of the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy — *Boreal Futures, Governance, Conservation and Development in Canada's Boreal*, October 2005; The Report of Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples — *Sharing Canada's Prosperity — A Hand Up, Not a Handout*, March 2007; Canada's National Forestry Strategy, 2003-2008 — A Sustainable Forest, the Canadian Commitment.

designated champion of Theme 3 of the National Forest Strategy (see below), NAFA expects to continue research and advocacy activities pertaining to Aboriginal capacity building in forest management and development.

National Forest Strategy Theme Three Capacity Working Group

The National Forest Strategy (2003)[11] commits, among other things, coalition members to:

> Implement institutional arrangements between Aboriginal peoples and governments that reflect a spirit of sharing responsibilities and benefits for the management, conservation, and sustainable use of forest lands and resources; and give effect to land claim settlements, treaties and formal agreements on forest resource use and management (NFS Action Item 3.2); and

> Direct federal and other available funding to support Aboriginal capacity building and participation in implementing the National Forest Strategy, through such measures as a renewed and expanded First Nation Forestry Program and the development of a parallel Métis forestry program, and in supporting Aboriginal participation in related local, regional and international meetings" (NFS Action Item 3.4).

These action items specifically address the institutional arrangements and support needed to accommodate Aboriginal rights and participation in the sustainable use of Canada's forests, circa 2003. In response to these action items, and under the lead of NAFA, an Aboriginal Capacity Working Group (ACWG), composed of representatives from Aboriginal organizations (First Nations and Métis), non-government organizations, academic institutions, and provincial and federal government departments, was formed.

During the preparation of this synthesis, the authors of this paper were active members of the ACWG, and in many respects, the thinking that evolved during the course of our work and the work of the ACWG were influenced by each other. In essence, the conclusions and recommendations that emerged from both initiatives are complementary, and focus mainly in the areas of policy reform and Aboriginal empowerment in the context of Aboriginal capacity building.

The ACWG discussion paper stresses that we need to build on the institutional and cultural resources already in existence in Aboriginal communities, including the traditional knowledge of Aboriginal peoples. Further, it considers the need for the cooperative development of new institutions, as essential in building Aboriginal capacity to participate in and benefit from economic opportunities in the forest sector.

The ACWG (2007) felt unequivocally that "Aboriginal peoples hold the primary responsibility for building their own capacity." Because recent court decisions indicate that the provinces are also responsible for consulting with Aboriginal peoples regarding forest practices and policy, meaningful consultation must include support to develop capacities to effectively engage and represent their interests, rights and traditions in consultation processes. In all cases, Aboriginal

The Aboriginal Capacity Working Group is to address the institutional arrangements and support needed for Aboriginal rights and participation in sustainable forest management.

There is a need to build on the institutional and cultural resources already in existence in Aboriginal communities.

"Aboriginal peoples hold the primary responsibility for building their own capacity."

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[11] National Forest Strategy Coalition (2003), *National Forest Strategy 2003-2008: A Sustainable Forest, The Canadian Commitment,* Ottawa, Queens Printer.

peoples need to be informed, to represent their interests, and to engage in consultations, all of which require capacity. The provinces contend that if there is any responsibility for supporting Aboriginal capacity building it arises from the federal Crown's fiduciary obligations. The Federal Crown has always justified its variable levels of support for Aboriginal capacity building as a humanitarian policy, rather than a legal responsibility. In the mean time, Aboriginal peoples hold that both levels of government are responsible for providing meaningful support to Aboriginal peoples to develop their capacities to engage and represent their rights and interests in interactions with government and industry. As noted by the ACWG, because Crown government approaches to Aboriginal capacity are not grounded with clear reference to constitutional and statutory authorities, the result at the national level is a patchwork of arrangements that are neither coordinated nor robust against political vagaries — a fact highlighted by the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples (2007):

> [T]he time has come for the federal government to stop treating Aboriginal economic development as "discretionary". The federal government must make meaningful investments in Aboriginal economic development, anchored by a newly formulated Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy designed to meet Aboriginal economic development aspirations and achieve measurable results. This strategy should take a coordinated and integrated approach across sectors, connecting to education, skills development and training, infrastructure development, institutional and governance capacity, capital development and access to lands and resources.

As pointed out by the ACWG, the current complex set of institutions and programs, often lacking in even rudimentary strategic coordination among them, creates an enormous, often redundant, and sometimes conflicting burden on the resources of Aboriginal communities. The Auditor General of Canada has identified several key guidelines for the development of new capacity building initiatives that will produce positive outcomes across a number of areas of concern simultaneously, while reducing cost:

> We identified seven factors that appear to have been critical in the successful implementation of our recommendations. These include the sustained attention of management, co-ordination of government programs, meaningful consultation with First Nations, development of First Nations capacity, establishment of First Nations institutions, development of an appropriate legislative base for programs, and consideration of the conflicting roles of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. In our view, ensuring that these factors are fully considered when adjusting existing programs and implementing new ones will make a significant difference in the lives of Aboriginal people (Auditor General of Canada 2006: para. 5.64).

Key recommendations advanced and conclusions reached by the ACWG include:

- Aboriginal peoples hold the primary responsibility for building their own capacity, but they must be financed and resourced to take on this role and institutional barriers to the exercise of their primary responsibility must be removed. New institutional arrangements are needed in order to provide assurances that historical treaties, Section 35 Constitutional rights, fiduciary obligations, and ongoing jurisprudence are honoured.

- New capacity builds on the foundations of existing capacity. The first step is to recognize the existing capacity represented by the distinct traditions and values of Aboriginal Peoples, as well as other strengths. Cultural fit is key in

Crown government approaches to Aboriginal capacity are not grounded with clear reference to constitutional and statutory authorities.

The ACWG advanced several recommendations when considering new institutional arrangements and capacity building initiatives.

any capacity-building or institutional development initiative, and initiatives need to be flexible and adaptive to different community conditions.

- The fiduciary doctrine and the duty to uphold the Crown's honour suggest that the federal government has a role to play in building capacity for Aboriginal peoples to represent their interests and to engage in economic development opportunities on provincial/territorial Crown land.

- Fiduciary obligations and the imperative to uphold the honour of the Crown give rise to the duty to consult and accommodate Aboriginal peoples interests when any decision or action by the Crown holds the potential to infringe their rights. The provinces hold jurisdiction over the vast majority of commercially productive forests in Canada so the bulk of this burden falls to them.

- A central component of meaningful consultation is the capacity of Aboriginal communities and organizations to take informed positions. Becoming informed about a proposed project or land use question and its potential impacts on one's interests involves drawing on a range of diverse resources. Accordingly, the idea is becoming more widely accepted that measures taken to ensure meaningful consultation logically should include the provision of support for Aboriginal capacity building.

- Apart from the legal accountabilities discussed above, Aboriginal peoples and the Crown share a common interest in the mutual benefits that will arise from capacity building for Aboriginal peoples' rights and participation in the forest sector (Kepkay 2007).[12]

By way of moving forward, the ACWG envisions a "two-pronged" approach to institutional development and capacity building:

On one hand, there is a need to address the fundamental lack of shared understandings and commitments regarding roles and responsibilities. The patchy, piecemeal progress on these issues to date needs to be tied together in proactive, overarching agreements and standards with regard to roles and responsibilities. Assigning clear jurisdiction and authority is a key issue. Gaps and failures at the legislative level need to be addressed, self-governance needs to be advanced, and the capacity for taking on these new authorities and new liabilities needs to be ensured. Modern-day treaties and land claims are a special sub-category of this type of work.

On the other hand, pragmatic opportunities for incremental progress within existing frameworks also need to be engaged. For example, although a new type of forest tenure specifically tailored to the traditions of Aboriginal peoples may require many years to develop, in the meantime it is possible to take smaller steps towards the same goal by adapting the terms of an existing tenure. The lessons being learned and the skills being developed by communities and businesses holding conventional tenures today will build their capacity to represent and pursue their interests in the innovative arrangements being developed for tomorrow (Kepkay 2007).

12 Kepkay, Mark (2007), *Building Capacity of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada's Forest Sector: Rationale, Model and Needs* (in association with Thematic Team 3 of the National Forest Strategy Coalition, 31 March 2007.

Discussion

There is little doubt that many government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity building initiatives have resulted in tangible benefits to many Aboriginal peoples in terms of increased well-being and standards of living. However, despite the fact that Aboriginal peoples are becoming more involved in the forest industry across all sectors "the lack of professional forestry and business training within Aboriginal communities remains the largest limiting factor for increased participation" according to some surveys (Aboriginal Strategy Group 2007).[13] While there are other contributing factors, every program has experienced a number of recurring themes that have reduced their effectiveness:

1) Given the fact that Aboriginal peoples are the youngest and fastest growing population in Canada, and experience unemployment and poverty rates many times the national average,[14] most programs are grossly under-funded. Moreover, access to capacity funds is often obtained via a competitive, proposal-driven process whereby funding is limited in scope and duration, and sometimes contingent upon leveraging money from non-government sources. Budgets for, and the flexibility of, current programs need to be increased substantially, commensurate with the need and desire of Aboriginal peoples and communities to participate in the forest/natural resource sector economy.

2) The focus of most programs to date has been on the Aboriginal individual, or client. Scant attention is given to the larger collective or social context in which the Aboriginal individual resides. This focus is further based on the implicit assumption that Aboriginal peoples lack capacity to capitalize on existing employment and business opportunities available to them. The thinking is that, if only Aboriginal peoples had the right education, training, skills and acumen, they could improve their lives and become part of the solution. However, many Aboriginal peoples likely possess considerable capacity strengths and skill sets to empower themselves and their communities. What is lacking are the appropriate institutional supports and conditions for this to happen.

3) Most Aboriginal capacity building programs are driven by current economic development needs and opportunities. However, commercial forestry may not be a solid foundation upon which to build sustainable futures for forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities. As currently conceived, practiced and regulated, this sector may have little to offer the long-term sustainability of Aboriginal communities, especially northern ones where current prospects for commercial forestry are marginal at best. Capacity building initiatives aimed exclusively at increasing Aboriginal participation in the forest sector may, in fact, be setting up Aboriginal peoples and communities for failure, disappointment and ultimately greater dependency. Alternatively, those capacity building and training programs that develop skills that are transferable between, or cross-cut, industry and business sectors may have more to offer.

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[13] Aboriginal Strategy Group (2007), *A Quantitative Assessment of Aboriginal Involvement in the Canadian Forestry Sector*, 30 April 2007.

[14] M. Mendelson (2004), *Aboriginal People in Canada's Labour Market: Work and Unemployment, Today and Tomorrow*, Caledon Institute of Social Policy, Ottawa; J. Kendall (2001), Circles of Disadvantage: Aboriginal Poverty and Underdevelopment in Canada, *American Review of Canadian Studies* 31(1): 43-60.

Most programs are grossly under-funded.

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Capacity building and training programs that develop skills that are transferable between, or cross-cut, industry and business sectors may have more to offer.

4) Most Aboriginal capacity building programs fail to address the fact that many Aboriginal peoples have different standards of income generation and schedules of work. Those wishing to participate in existing employment and business opportunities need to be prepared, or "culturally trained", to effectively manage the challenges that come with such work. The lack of "regimented work" role models in many communities, exacerbated by the lack of consistent enforcement of rules related to workplace conduct, perpetuates a feedback cycle that encourages anomie and a reluctance to accept responsibility or accountability for actions (and inaction). The future of Aboriginal communities rests on the shoulders of those people who can take advantage of existing economic opportunities while continuing to embrace Aboriginal values, orientations and social responsibilities.

Elders speak often about a time in the past when everyone had responsibilities, even children, who took care of younger siblings and participated in food gathering and preparation activities. With the collapse of the traditional economy, and especially the productive roles of men, a gap was created in the roles and responsibilities within family and community. Capacity building initiatives need to ensure that both new and old responsibilities fit with, and find the support within, the community.

All governments must begin to view the issue as a legal responsibility and begin to address it in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. There needs to be greater coordination in the delivery of regional and national Aboriginal capacity building initiatives. Long-term institutional support and frameworks need to be in place to allow First Nation and Métis communities to implement their capacity building strategies.

Government sponsored Aboriginal capacity building programs, however, cannot address the consensus building and integration exercises that are necessary to accommodate the multifaceted issues at play within a community. Only the community itself can do the work and identify the solutions that will best fit their unique circumstances. For example, communities with significant control over education delivery could consider designing capacity building programs that parallel the fundamental learning and life skills taught in elementary school and carry on through high school and higher levels of education to the job market. It is well demonstrated that capacity begets capacity and human resources are needed not only to envision this type of program, but to also develop and implement projects that meet goals and objectives guided by the community vision. Government needs to play an important role in facilitating these processes, including the willingness and ability to be flexible to community needs at the local or regional levels. By way of improving the delivery and efficacy of existing Aboriginal capacity building programs, there is a need to:

- Encourage concordance between/among various initiatives,
- Move away from proposal driven processes,
- Develop appropriate evaluation and monitoring criteria,
- Institute flexible reporting requirements,
- Open funding windows to support long-term capacity development plans,
- Increase substantially program budgets, and
- Develop a community focus that integrates with an individual client focus.

3.0 Local Capacity Building Efforts to Engage the Forest Sector: Lessons Learned from Case Studies

The following section summarizes the lessons learned from analysis of four First Nations' efforts — two from western Canada and two from eastern Canada — to address their capacity and employment needs with respect to participation in the forest sector (see Appendix B for full descriptions). The Tl'azt'en, the Little Red River Cree (LRRCN), the Waswanipi Cree and the Innu Nations have attempted in various ways to engage the forest sector to create meaningful employment for their communities and/or to exert greater influence over how forestry is conducted on their traditional lands. Each case study is unique and, in and by itself, instructive with respect to the issue of capacity building. Collectively, commonalities or patterns emerge that inform the development of an alternative approach to capacity building in forest/natural resource dependent Aboriginal communities in Section 4.0.

All four case studies have lessons to tell and commonalities are apparent in some cases, but not all. The LRRCN, Tl'azt'en Nation and Waswanipi Cree turned to forestry as an economic generator, but were far from successful in realizing the full range of benefits from commercial forestry. Before the onset of large scale forestry operations in the first two areas, seasonal small-scale logging was practiced by members of each First Nation and provided a good "cultural fit" with other, more traditional seasonal pursuits (hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering, etc.). Thus, it was a natural evolution that, in areas with few other economic opportunities, these First Nations would look to commercial forestry as a solution to address many of the social and economic problems within their communities. Commercial forestry has significantly impacted the Waswanipi Cree. However, their efforts to better manage forestry operations on their traditional lands and benefit economically from their participation in the forest sector, have not mitigated these impacts. Forestry has not yet impacted Innu peoples and traditional lands to the extent as it has in the other three areas, and Innu efforts to manage for development prior to large scale timber harvesting is an opportunity not enjoyed by the other three First Nations.

Cultural Fit

A theme common to the LRRCN, Tl'azt'en and Waswanipi experiences is "cultural fit." The most successful capacity building/job placement initiatives in the two western First Nations were either in intensive, seasonal, wage-labour positions with no restriction in the number of hours worked daily (e.g., fire-fighting and silviculture operations) or in ecological monitoring and planning (i.e., activities that brought band members into close contact with the land). With respect to the LRRCN, of the 30 people trained to be log haulers none are employed in that profession today; "no one it seemed wanted to be a truck driver" (J. Webb, pers. comm., June 2007). Similarly, high absenteeism and employee desertion rates were prevalent among the Waswanipi Cree.

There are undoubtedly many reasons for these failures (long working hours during prolonged periods of darkness, lack of human contact, distance from home, monotonous work regime, insufficient wages, encroachment on social roles and responsibilities, etc.). Contemporary concepts of time and work for some northern

Before the onset of large scale forestry operations in the first two areas, seasonal small-scale logging was practiced by members of each First Nation and provided a good "cultural fit" with other, more traditional seasonal pursuits.

Cultural fit is important when considering capacity building initiatives.

Cree have been shaped heavily by welfare dependency and the resultant anomie that such dependency produces. However, traditional Cree concepts of time and work, which are at odds with the "9 to 5" work ethos and regimes of industrial capitalism and government and educational institutions, may also figure predominantly. As with the Lakota Sioux, who consider "9 to 5" work as "lazy man's work" (Pikering 2004),[15] task-oriented forms of production governed by community-sanctioned social relations that result in the provision of the necessities of human life, likely continue to influence northern Cree concepts of work and time. This suggests that there is a need to develop:

> the kinds of situations that permit Native peoples to use their own cultural practices in recruiting, contracting, and organizing wage labour; that allow them to construct an identity as wage workers without destroying basic cultural values; and that enable them to reproduce themselves as wage workers within an indigenous cultural framework (Albers 1996:258).[16]

Recalling the success of small scale logging operations of the Tl'azet'en and LRRCN prior to their acquisition of commercial forest licenses, the take home message is clear: **capacity building and job placement initiatives have to fit with community values and aspirations**, and cannot be imposed, however noble the intentions, in the absence of a thorough assessment of the available options and impacts. Although Aboriginal peoples have adapted readily to the regimented work routine of lumber mill operations in other parts of Canada (e.g., Rainy River, H. Bombay, pers. comm., May 2007), intensive, seasonal contract opportunities and employment grounded in work on the land appears to provide a better cultural fit for many northern rural Aboriginal communities. While employment and contract opportunities that blur the barrier between life and work in such contexts have a better chance of success, ultimately it is the community that must determine what is in its best interests — an activity that will require a considerable investment in research and planning.

Political and Market Forces

For the LRRCN, the lack of political stability within the nation undermined efforts to find an acceptable balance between cultural and economic sustainability. This political instability was, in part, a function of the fact that the nation did not have the opportunity to explore an appropriate balance between the two prior to being confronted with forestry development decisions. The business-as-usual forestry approach that was ultimately adopted exacerbated conflict between more traditional and more fiscally-minded advocates within the nation. The inability of the Tl'azt'en to successfully operate under the terms and conditions their TFL made their foray into commercial harvesting and milling unsustainable. Similarly, the LRRCN were unable to influence or change political will, and the province walked away from the planning table, thwarting the nation's efforts to develop management approaches that would sustain cultural values and lifestyles.

Both the LRRCN and the Tl'azet'en were/are at the mercy of market forces, which, under existing forestry regulations, undermined their efforts to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Alternatively, capacity and training programs that developed

Capacity building and job placement initiatives have to fit with community values and aspirations.

Lack of political stability within the nation undermined efforts to find an acceptable balance between cultural and economic sustainability.

Capacity building initiatives must develop skill sets that are transferable between industries.

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[15] K. Pickering (2004), Decolonizing Time Regimes: Lakota Conceptions of Work, Economy, and Society. *American Anthropologist* 106(1): 85-97.

[16] P. Alders (1996), From Legend to Land to Labor, In *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, pp. 245-273, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

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educational and skill sets that were transferable between, or cross-cut, industry and business sectors had more to offer. The Innu Guardian Program produced "highly qualified people" with skills and knowledge across knowledge systems and land use sectors that are intended to be transferable.

The Innu Experience

The Innu experience differs somewhat from the LRRCN, Tl'azet'en and Waswanipi. Changes in political will and provincial legislation led to the development of an agreement with the province that transferred management responsibility to the Innu. This, in turn, led the Innu to develop more effective responses and programs to meet their needs. For example, skills development included the acquisition and application of traditional skills and knowledge, along side western scientific knowledge. Real changes on the ground were also realized. While few Innu appear to have benefited economically from the Innu timber allocation, skills and capacity development in "ecosystem-based" management, planning and monitoring, which primarily focused on the protection of Innu values, provided far greater benefits. Yet, the Innu still lack the institutional and long-term support to be proactive rather than reactive. Like the LRRCN, Tl'azt'en and Waswanipi Cree they need time, money and other resources to properly plan and realize their future.

The Innu successful initiatives included traditional skills and knowledge along with western science.

4.0 Aboriginal Capacity Building from the Ground-Up

Capacity building refers to the need for First Nations People and First Nations organizations to gain the competence and ability to do various things. In Burnt Church it was a term used by the government to say that the Burnt Church people were not ready to fish for lobster, nor ready to manage the fishery in a responsible way, or to engage in business and economic development. Capacity building has become a polite and politically correct way for governments and others to say to the First Nations: 'You are not ready to do this yet. But if you wait; if you are patient; if you get more training; if you make the arrangements we suggest; if you just do this our way, sooner or later you will have the capacity to do what we do. And when you accomplish this: when you have qualified for our programmes, when you have slowly managed to gain the qualifications we require, then we will consider some kind of partnership with you (Matthew Coon Come 2001).[17]

The words of Matthew Coon Come speak eloquently to the thinking behind, and shortcomings of, most government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity building programs related to forestry and the natural resource development sector. In order to become engaged, to participate in what non-Aboriginal Canadian society and economy has to offer, Aboriginal **individuals** must develop skills and capacities that are valued and rewarded by this hegemony. Nevertheless, many capacity building programs have allowed Aboriginal peoples to develop skills and capacities to engage in existing employment and business opportunities in the forest sector that have benefited them economically, personally and in other ways, and successes in these areas should be celebrated. Moreover, funding support for current programs and initiatives that target the capacities of Aboriginal **individuals** should be increased substantially and made more user-friendly to those peoples they are intended to serve.

However, as apparent from previous sections, capacity for the empowerment of Aboriginal communities has received scant attention from either program sponsors or the communities themselves. By way of addressing this gap, this section advances a complementary approach to addressing the capacity issue in forest-dependent Aboriginal communities. This approach is theoretically grounded in a growing body of literature on Aboriginal and indigenous empowerment where local communities drive the design and delivery of capacity building programs. In so doing, it builds on and situates existing Aboriginal capacity building initiatives in a conceptual framework that has potential, if supported and implemented, to allow Aboriginal peoples to become true architects of their future.

Many capacity building programs have allowed Aboriginal peoples to develop skills and capacities to engage in existing employment and business opportunities and these successes should be celebrated.

Capacity for the empowerment of Aboriginal communities has received scant attention.

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[17] M. Coon Come (2001), Capacity Building in First Nations, In Aboriginal Forestry 2001: Capacity Building, Partnerships, Business Development, and Opportunities for Aboriginal Youth, Proceedings of the Conference of the First Nations Forest Program, Saskatoon, 21-24 January, 2001.

A Complementary Approach to Building Capacity in Aboriginal Communities

Current capacity building initiatives to engage forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples in the forest sector alone are not sufficient, nor should they be the first priority. Forest-dependent communities generally are inherently unstable compared, for example, to agricultural or tourism dependent communities. Using a broad range of indicators, Drielsma (1984)[18] found that forest dependent communities are among the least stable and prosperous because they tend to have high population turnover and more social problems (e.g., divorce, suicide, low social cohesion) than other communities. For a variety of reasons, these problems are even more acute and compounded in forest-dependent Aboriginal communities. Moreover, recent analysis reveal that Aboriginal communities in forested environments have significantly lower average incomes and employment rates than those in non-forested environments (Gysbers and Lee 2003)[19].

In a Canada that embraces cultural and biological diversity, and seeks to understand the linkages between the two, Aboriginal communities and their representative governments need access to resources (financial and otherwise) to:

1) construct their vision of the future and their desired relationships with their lands and resources, and
2) build and walk down the path(s) to get there.

In the mean time, Aboriginal peoples and communities ought not to ignore existing opportunities and challenges. Short-term goals and objectives to take advantage of current employment/business opportunities and to address current challenges faced by the community need to be set. Existing "capacity strengths", not just capacity needs, of the community to achieve these targets need to be identified. Too often, capacity building initiatives for Aboriginal peoples in forestry and other natural resource development sectors are framed by the "capacity deficit model" or assumption that Aboriginal peoples and communities lack the capacity to participate in existing economic opportunities. However, such a notion obfuscates the fact that such opportunities are created by political agendas, institutional arrangements and economic processes that Aboriginal peoples had little hand in creating. Collectively, we need to ask: What are the existing capacity strengths and capacity needs of Aboriginal peoples and communities to:

1) participate in existing employment/business opportunities in forestry and other natural resource development sectors, and
2) construct, implement and realize their vision of the future with respect to their traditional lands and resources?

The real capacity needs of forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities have a much better chance of being properly identified and ultimately accommodated by framing the capacity issue as a strategy with two different, but integrated, timelines.

Capacity building initiatives to engage forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples in the forest sector alone are not sufficient.

Communities still need to embrace existing opportunities and challenges.

Capacity strengths of communities also need to be identified.

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[18] J.H. Drielsma, (1984), *The Influence of Forest-based Industries on Rural Communities*, PhD dissertation, School of Environmental Studies and Natural Resources, Yale University.

[19] J.D. Gysbers and P. Lee (2003), *Aboriginal Communities in Forest Regions in Canada: Disparities in Socio- Economic Conditions*, Global Forest Watch, Edmonton, Alberta.

While it is important to address local capacity needs and capacity strengths over the immediate/short-term to take advantage of existing economic and other opportunities, this cannot be accomplished at the expense of the long-term objectives and aspirations of Aboriginal communities. The capacity strengths and needs of the community and its members to achieve their ultimate goals need to be identified and accommodated. It is also critical that the capacity issue be addressed in a framework that includes not only forestry and other natural resource development sectors, but all sectors (health, education, local government, traditional economy, etc.) relevant to building and sustaining the human, natural, social and cultural capitals or assets of Aboriginal peoples and communities. The capacity to develop and implement economically and ecologically sustainable relationships with traditional lands and resources cannot be considered in isolation of other capacity needs. By addressing the capacity question within an integrated and comprehensive community-driven strategy, the chances of success over both the short-term and long-term will be increased substantially.

This vision would target not just a sustainable economic future, but a future that sustains and enhances the well-being and ecological, social, cultural and other values of the community and its members; all of which are interrelated and cannot separated without undermining Aboriginal institutions, rights and cultures. All members of the community (elders, youth, women, men, traditional land users, health care workers, educational workers, chief and council, etc.) would be involved in this visioning exercise.

Fundamental to the success of this project are the realizations that Aboriginal communities need the time, opportunity and resources (financial and otherwise) to:

1) document, assess, prioritize and develop consensus about their uses, values and needs with respect to their forested lands and natural resources;
2) undertake the planning and other related research (trade-off analysis, market assessments, traditional kind use studies, etc.) to produce economic development, land use management and other plans (health, education/training, etc.) commensurate with the community's needs and desired relationship with their lands and resources; and
3) negotiate, with government and industry, and implement, the appropriate institutional and other arrangements to affect these plans and create win-win situations for all involved.

In order to undertake and implement these steps in a comprehensive and effective manner, local capacity needs and capacity strengths will need to be identified, addressed and accommodated. It is within this scoping exercise that assessments of, and engagements with, current government sponsored capacity building programs should take place. At the same time, Aboriginal peoples and

communities may, in fact, be found already to possess strengths required for their empowerment, long-term sustainability and implementing the above initiatives. Too often Aboriginal peoples are coerced into believing that they do not possess the "required capacities" and have been forced to hire outsiders ("rental capacity") in order to take advantage of existing economic development opportunities in forestry and the natural resource sectors — an action that may or may not serve the interests of the Aboriginal community.

Hiring out capacity may not serve in the best interests of the Aboriginal community.

The capacity to take advantage of, and to engage in, current employment and business development opportunities in forestry and other natural resource development sectors is one of the key capacities that forest dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities may want to consider over the short-term. However, focusing on the development of short-term capacities at the expense of capacities required to realize long term individual and community goals and aspirations needs to be avoided. The capacity issue challenges Aboriginal peoples and communities at both temporal scales:

Communities need to consider capacity at both short term and long term temporal scales.

- **short-term**, to capitalize on existing employment/economic development opportunities and address current challenges, and
- **long-term**, to realize their desired relationships with their lands and resources.

In order to partake in opportunities so as to benefit personal goals and community aspirations, Aboriginal peoples must also have the capacity to effectively **represent** both themselves and their communities in their **engagements** with government and industry. The ability to "represent" requires a culturally grounded understanding of individual and community values, goals, needs, rights, issues and interests and their articulation — a tall order without the necessary financial support and resourcing to undertake the type of community visioning exercises advocated in this paper. By way of example, elders with a life-time worth of experience on the land may be well positioned to represent the needs, values and aspirations of their communities, but they might have little capacity to participate in existing engagements with government and industry. Conversely, Aboriginal youth who leave their communities to obtain education and training in fields that capitalize on existing employment opportunities in forestry and natural resource extraction, planning and management, may lack the capacity to effectively represent community assets, interests and values. Building engagement capacities at the expense of representative capacities may be avoided by financing and resourcing the type of processes considered below.

Aboriginal peoples must also have the capacity to effectively represent both themselves and their communities in their engagements with government and industry.

Ideally, capacity-building initiatives in forest-dependent Aboriginal communities can be conceptualized as a three-dimensional box or contingency table structured along three axes (Figure 1):

1) engagement/representation on the "X" axis,
2) short-term/long-term on the "Y" axis, and
3) individual/community along the "Z" axis.

Figure 1. Relationship of individual/community, engagement/representation, and short-term/long-term capacities.

To date, most government sponsored Aboriginal capacity building efforts in forestry have focused on **individual** capacities to **engage** in available employment/business development opportunities over the **short-term** (black box in Figure 1). Any capacities that are built in areas related to community, representation, and/or long-term needs are purely coincidental and a collateral outcome of this focus.

Another way of looking at the issue is to conceptualize the black box in Figure 1 as forming the inner core of larger circle (Figure 2). Here, operating under the notion that we should "begin where we are at", individual/engagement/short-term capacities — the capacities targeted by existing programs — would provide the building blocks or core capacities needed to achieve community/representation/long-term capacities.

Individual capacities targeted by existing programs provide core capacities needed to achieve community goals and aspirations.
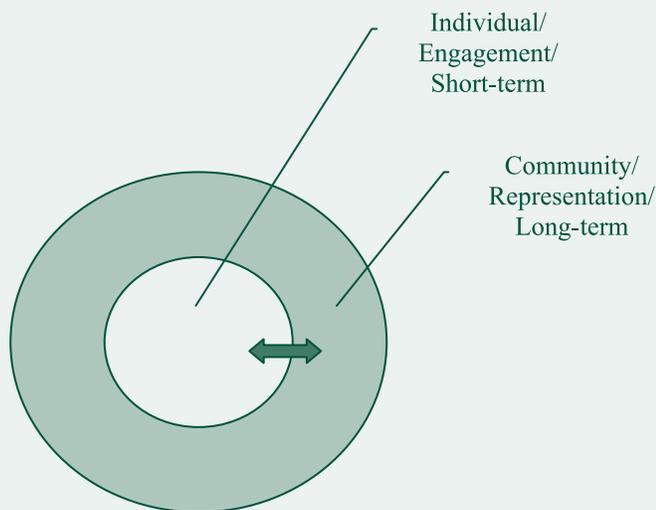
Figure 2. Relationship of core and broader capacities required for Aboriginal empowerment and sustainability.

The National Forest Strategy Team 3 Capacity Working Group (2007)[20] puts this relationship nicely in the context of forest tenure arrangements:

> … *pragmatic opportunities for incremental progress within existing frameworks also need to be engaged. For example, although a new type of forest tenure specifically tailored to the traditions of Aboriginal Peoples may require many years to develop, in the meantime it is possible to take smaller steps towards the same goal by adapting the terms of an existing tenure. The lessons being learned and the skills being developed by communities and businesses holding conventional tenures today will build their capacity to represent and pursue their interests in the innovative arrangements being developed for tomorrow.*

These figures illustrate that:

1) current capacity building efforts, no matter how successful, target only a limited percentage of the capacity requirements of forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities; and

2) the issue of capacity in this context, and the collective response to it, needs to consider all these dimensions and their articulation.

Considering Aboriginal Capitals and Values

Another way of looking at the capacity issue, particularly in regards to social and cultural sustainability, is to consider the many values and benefits that Aboriginal forest-dependent peoples derive from their relationship to and dependency on their traditional lands and resources. A short list of these values include:

- Economic value: This includes both the dollar ($) value obtained through the sale or exchange of animal and plant products (furs, meat, handicrafts, etc.), and their food and medicinal replacement values (i.e., bush economies);

Current capacity building efforts, no matter how successful, target only a limited percentage of the capacity requirements of forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities.

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[20] NAFA (2007), *Building Capacity for Aboriginal Rights and Participation in Canada's Forest Sector: Roles and Responsibilities,* A Discussion Paper. National Aboriginal Forest Association in association with National Forestry Strategy Coalition Thematic Theme Team 3.

- Nutritional/medicinal value: Wild foods contains far more iron, nutrients and essential fatty acids than store bought meats. Moreover, when Aboriginal people consume foods from the land, they are not eating processed foods which are high in fat, sugar and salt, and a major factor contributing to the high incidence of obesity and Type 2 diabetes in many Aboriginal communities;
- Physical and mental values: Pursuing, procuring, preparing, transporting animals and plants for consumption and exchange (i.e., living on the land) requires physical activity which promotes physical well-being, and through the release of endorphins, mental well-being;
- Environmental value: Food procurement from the land is far more energy efficient, and less costly to the environment, than buying and consuming packaged feed-lot meats (beef, chicken, pork, etc.) which take anywhere from 25 to 75 times the amount of energy to produce than is returned in calories to the consumer (Freeman 1991)[21];
- Ecological value: Aboriginal people through hunting, use of fire and other management practices traditionally played a role in creating and sustaining biological diversity and ecological integrity of forested areas (Stevenson 2006).[22] When these roles, responsibilities and relationships are disrupted, a loss of biodiversity often follows;
- Psychological/spiritual value: Most Aboriginal people derive spiritual and psychological value by being out on the land, procuring resources and fulfilling the roles and responsibilities the Creator gave them;
- Cultural value: Important/critical cultural values, identity, knowledge, language, songs, and stories are promoted and retained through using, sharing and talking about plants, animals and their habitats. Resource use is the foundation of many Aboriginal cultures; and
- Social value: Social roles, statuses, relationships and responsibilities are sustained when plants and animals are procured and shared on a regular basis. When they are not used or shared, the cultural and social fabric of forest-dependent communities breaks down and other motivations for forming social relationships emerge.

The question that must be asked of all capacity building initiatives targeted at forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples is:

Does the initiative build upon or undermine the social, cultural, natural, human, and other capitals or assets of Aboriginal communities?

All too frequently, only the economic benefits/incentives that derive from "capacity for employment" initiatives are taken into consideration. What is not considered is the impact of such initiatives on the social, cultural, and other capitals (and their integration) necessary to sustain Aboriginal people and communities. In fact, social, cultural and other considerations, and how they might be affected by such capacity building for employment scenarios, are viewed as external to the sponsoring agency's mandate, to be dealt with by Aboriginal beneficiaries. While most capacity building programs are well intended and meaning, and not necessarily antagonistic to other Aboriginal values, such approaches become grand experiments in social and cultural engineering when they do not consider the fundamental linkages and relationships among these capitals, and how changes in one many affect changes in others.

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[21] M.M.R. Freeman (1991), Energy, food security and A.D. 2040: The case for sustainable utilization of whale stocks." *Resource Management and Optimization* 8 (3-4): 235-244.

[22] M.G. Stevenson (2006), Possibility of Difference: Rethinking Co-management. *Human Organization* 65(2):167-180.

As the case studies analyzed in Section 3.0 suggest, the social capital and assets necessary to sustain Aboriginal communities may not be supported by existing capacity building programs. Witness the fact that none of the 30 members of the LRRCN that were trained as log haul truck drivers found employment in that profession. The nature of the job (i.e., long hours, alone, in a monotonous job) likely eroded rather than enhanced social roles, relationships and responsibilities, and the economic benefits and employment incentives were simply not great enough to outweigh the losses (social, cultural, other) that would result from being gainfully employed in the forest sector. The same could be said of the Waswanipi case study where a high desertion rate was identified as the greatest problem among both Aboriginal and employer interviewees.

Grounding the Model

This section grounds the model proposed above in the wider literature of community empowerment and sustainability.

Community Capacity

Beckley et al (forthcoming)[23] define community capacity as the "collective ability of a group (the community) to combine various forms of capital within institutional and relational contexts to produce desired results or outcomes." Capacity outcomes may be defined either narrowly or more broadly. In the model being advanced here Aboriginal communities may want to consider both macro (long-term) and micro (short term) views of, or approaches to, capacity building. External capacity building initiatives tend to support more short-term, expedient capacity outcomes. Communities should define their indicators of measures of success accordingly.

Community capacity is the collective ability of a group (the community) to combine various forms of capital within institutional and relational contexts to produce desired results or outcomes.

Nadeau et al (2003)[24] examine the notion of "community" from multiple perspectives advancing three conceptual frameworks for assessing communities: **community capacity, community well-being and community resiliency**. All three are inter-related and need to be considered together in a comprehensive and manner. Community capacity and community resiliency are closely related and, in turn, result in community well-being. In other words, the issue of community capacity cannot be considered in isolation from community well-being or resiliency.

Community capacity and community resiliency are closely related.

Community capacity in forestry has been used to estimate the collective ability of residents to respond to external and internal stress, to create and take advantage of opportunities, and to meet their diverse needs (Kusel 1996).[25] The major challenge of community capacity assessments is to identify the specific attributes of a community that facilitate or impede its ability to respond to problems or external threats (Nadeau et al 2003). According to these authors, the four major attributes that determine community capacity are:

Attributes of community capacity include social capital, human capital, environmental capital, and economic capital.

1) Social Capital,
2) Human Capital (skills and abilities of individuals),

[23] T.D. Beckley, D. Martz , S. Nadeau, W.C. Reimer and E. Wall. (forthcoming), Multiple Capacities, Multiple Outcomes: Delving Deeper into the Meaning of Community Capacity, *Journal of Rural and Community Development.*

[24] S. Nadeau, B. A. Shindler and C. Kayoynnis (2203), Beyond the Economic Model: Assessing Sustainability in Forest Communities. In *Two Paths to Sustainable Forests: Public Values in Canada and the United States*, edited by B.A. Shindler, T. Beckley and C. Finley, OSU Press.

[25] J. Kusel, (1996), Well-being in forest-dependent communities, Part 1: A New Approach. *In Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project. Final Report to Congress, vol. II, Assessments and Scientific Basis for Management Options.* University of California, Davis, Centers for Water and Wildland Resources, pp 361-374.

3) Environmental Capital (natural resources, environmental integrity/biodiversity), and

4) Economic Capital (physical/financial infrastructure/resources).

Social Capital

Social capital is the networks, norms, values and social trust that result in, and are the result of, collective and socially negotiated ties and relationships.

Social capital has been used to refer to features of social organization such as networks, norms, values and social trust that result in, and are the result of, collective and socially negotiated ties and relationships. Recent work by a number of authors (e.g., Edwards 2002, Flora and Flora 1993, Haley 2007, Naryan 1999, Putman 2000)[26] is beginning to converge on the notion that social capital operates on two different, but complementary levels: 1) horizontally to facilitate the inclusion of individuals, groups, ideas and values into communities, and 2) vertically to facilitate interaction between individual communities and external organizations, institutions and other communities. The former is sometimes called "**bonding**" social capital, while the latter is referred to as "**linking**" social capital (Nayran 1999). Beckley et al (nd) further identify at least four basic types of social relations that constitute "bonding" capital: market relations, bureaucratic relations, associative relations and communal relations. It is the latter two that perhaps are strongest, or most pervasive, in structuring social relations and interaction in most forest dependent Aboriginal communities.

Communities that are internally cohesive with access to diverse resources and opportunities resulting from viable external relationships have the greatest potential for sustainability.

Haley (2007) conceptualizes social capital in northern Aboriginal communities as being characterized by the interplay of bonding and linking social capital. Communities with low internal cohesion and high external linking risk losing people and the breakdown of social networks to out-migration (i.e., relocation due to the rejection of non-economically viable social relations). Alternatively, high internal cohesion and few external linkages — may lead to social, cultural and economic paralysis. Aboriginal communities that score high on both counts (internally cohesive with access to diverse resources and opportunities resulting from viable external relationships and connections) have the greatest prospects for sustainability. In today's world, a strong measure of both is needed to sustain most forest-dependent Aboriginal communities. Communities that are not well integrated internally and have few external linkages that provide access to resources, people, institutions and opportunities outside the community are likely not sustainable (Figure 3).

[26] R. Edwards (2002), Social Capital, *A Sloan Work and Family Encyclopedia*, Chestnut Hill, MA; The Sloan Work and Family Research Network; C.B. Flora and J.L. Flora (1993), Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructures: A Necessary Ingredient, *The Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science* 529: 48-58; S. Haley, (2007), *The Impact of Resource Development on Social Ties. Theory and Methods for Assessment*, Paper presented at the Society for Applied Anthropology Meeting, Tampa; D. Nayran (1999) *Bonds and Bridges: Social Capital and Poverty, Policy Research Working Paper* No. 2167, Washington, DC. The World Bank; R.D. Putnam (2000), *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon and Shuster, New York.

Figure 3. Interplay of internal cohesion and external linkages in Aboriginal
communities, with projected outcomes for long-term sustainability.

**Internal
Cohesion**

	Low	High
Low	Poor	Moderate
High	Moderate	Good

**External
Linkages**

Current Aboriginal capacity building programs often build the "linking" social
capital of individuals to external opportunities, but fall short in supporting
"bonding" social capital within communities. Framed in this way, forestry and
other natural resource development sectors, and the capacity building programs
that facilitate Aboriginal participation in these sectors, definitely have a critical
role to play in advancing the needs, rights and interests of Aboriginal
communities. Alternatively, one can readily grasp how too great an emphasis on
accessing external opportunities and creating external linkages without careful
consideration of the impacts on the internal or bonding social capital of the
community may not be in anyone's best interest.

Beckley et al (ibid) envision social, human, natural and economic capitals as
providing the minimum asset base for any given community. Moreover, these can
be combined and organized to produce a range of outcomes, including capacities
to:

1) maintain or enhance economic vitality (economic capital),
2) access resources from the state (revenues, political will, infrastructure),
3) maintain a vital civic culture (social and cultural capital),
4) subsist and persist (human capital),
5) maintain ecological integrity (natural capital), and
6) maintain human health (human capital).

Capacity outcomes relating to employment and economic enhancement have
traditionally been the major, if not exclusive, concern of many politicians,
community developers and business leaders (Beckley et al forthcoming). However,
the capacity to subsist or persist while sustaining desired social networks, human
health, ecological integrity and cultural values is likely of greater importance to
many forest-dependent Aboriginal communities. At any one time, a community
may respond more effectively to existing threats and opportunities by emphasizing
capacity outcomes in one area over another. As an organizational device and
planning tool for Aboriginal communities to assess and implement their capacity
strengths and needs over both the long- and short-term, Beckley et al's (ibid)
hypothetical community asset-amoeba model, with some modifications to reflect
Aboriginal needs and interests, may have great utility (Figure 4).

*Current Aboriginal
capacity building
programs often build the
"linking" social capital
of individuals to external
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short in supporting
"bonding" social capital
within communities.*

*The capacity to subsist
or persist while
sustaining desired social
networks, human health,
ecological integrity and
cultural values is likely of
greater importance to
many forest-dependent
Aboriginal communities.*

Figure 4. Beckley et al's (forthcoming) community asset amoeba model (reproduced with permission of the authors).

Social Capital

Economic Capital

Natural Capital

Human Capital
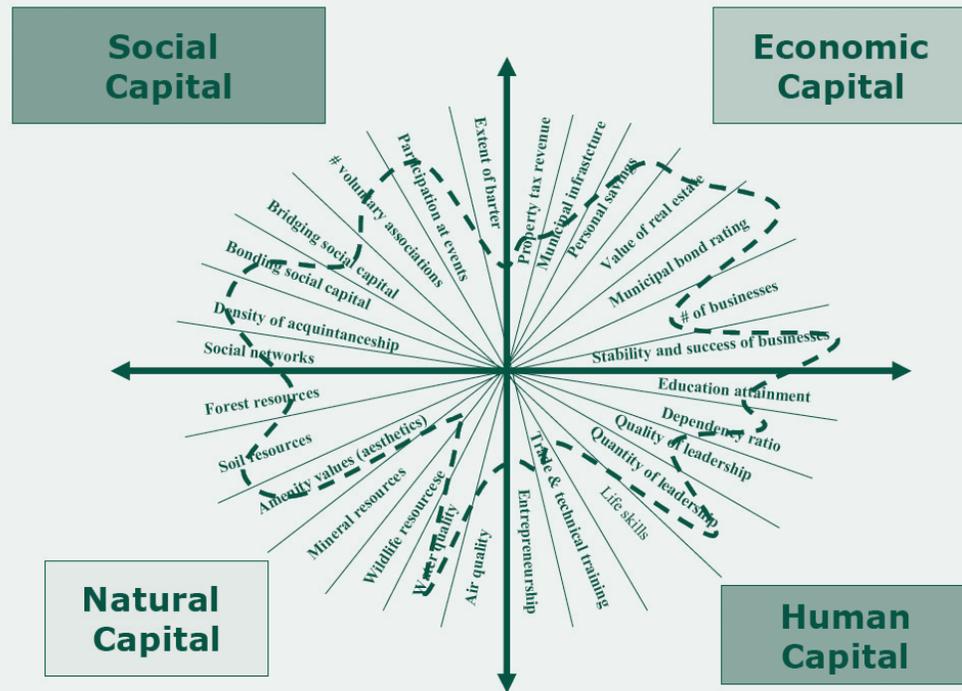
Empowerment is multidimensional, operative at a number of levels, and is less an outcome than a process.

Many Aboriginal capacity building initiatives implicitly assume that increasing the skill sets of individuals to participate in existing economic opportunities will ultimately result in community empowerment. This is a flawed assumption.

Capacities for Empowerment

The traditional human resource development model of Aboriginal capacity building is concerned with economic outcomes for individuals. This uni-dimensional approach fails to see that empowerment is multidimensional (occurring within sociological, psychological, economic, political and other dimensions), operative at a number of levels (individual, group, community), and is less an outcome than a process (Hur 2006).[27] Personal or individual empowerment is not the same as community or collective empowerment. The former relates to the way the people think about themselves, as well as the knowledge, capacities, skills and mastery they actually possess (Staples 1990:32); the latter to the processes by which individuals join together to change their condition, assist one another, learn together and develop skills for collective action (Hur 2006:530).

Many Aboriginal capacity building initiatives implicitly assume that increasing the skill sets of individuals to participate in existing economic opportunities will ultimately result in community empowerment. This is a flawed assumption. Although individuals can become empowered through personal development, they do not always become effective in helping to build their community's collective empowerment (Hur 2006:530). It is not uncommon in many Aboriginal communities to witness personal empowerment occuring at the expense of collective empowerment whereby new, externally oriented socioeconomic relationships and arrangements replace older, internally generated ones. Ideally,

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[27] M.H. Hur (2006), Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical Perspectives: Exploring a Typology of the Process and Components Across Disciplines, Journal of Community Psychology 34(5):523-540.

[28] L.H. Staples (1990), Powerful Ideas about Empowerment, Administration in Social Work 14(2):29-42.

personal and collective empowerment should be a complementary, two-way process (Staples 1990).[28] The goal of individual empowerment is to achieve a state of liberation strong enough to impact one's power in life, community and society, whereas the goal of collective empowerment is to achieve a sense of security, freedom, belonging and power that can lead to constructive change (Hur 2006:535).

Existing approaches to Aboriginal building capacity are designed to empower individuals, not communities. No specific attention is given to the design or implementation of programs, processes and institutions that would empower the latter. No real consideration is given to the impacts that capacity building programs have on the social, cultural and natural assets of Aboriginal communities. Viewed in this way, Aboriginal communities are in the best position to determine their own capacity needs and strengths for individual and collective empowerment. What is missing is the political will to create and finance institutions and programs for this to proceed in an effective and appropriate manner.

Aboriginal communities are in the best position to determine their own capacity needs and strengths for individual and collective empowerment.

Capacity for Social Entrepreneurship

Aboriginal capacity building programs that target and promote the entrepreneurial skills of individuals, while beneficial in many ways to individuals (e.g., increased income, standard of living, feelings of self-worth, etc.) have ignored community goals, needs and aspirations, leaving it up to individual beneficiaries to contribute to the greater good of the community. Experience shows that some do and some don't. A potential solution to this disconnect may be the consideration of capacity building initiatives in "social entrepreneurship." The concept of "social entrepreneurship" has emerged to encourage entrepreneurship in support of social sustainability whereby "social purpose is achieved primarily through entrepreneurship; there is little if any distribution of profit to individuals, as any surplus is reinvested for the long-term benefit of the community; constituents are democratically involved, and there is accountability" (Anderson et al. 2006).[29] These authors examined a number of case studies in Canada that provided powerful evidence of the importance of "social entrepreneurship" as a tool for community empowerment:

Social entrepreneurship is an important tool for community empowerment.

> *Especially evident are the prevalence of community ownership and the acknowledgement of the importance of long-term profitability and growth of businesses created, not as an end but as a means to an end. And it is these ends that make their activities social entrepreneurship. Some of these ends included the creation of employment with characteristics that 'fit' the interest, capabilities, and preferred lifestyles of community members; control of traditional lands and activities on these lands; and the creation of wealth to fund education, health and wellness, housing and other social programs…. While what these Aboriginal groups have done as they have identified opportunities and created business is clearly entrepreneurship, their reasons for doing so and the organizational forms they have adopted extend far beyond wealth creation for the entrepreneur(s)/ owners involved. The wealth is generated to fund social objectives (Anderson et al. 2006:46, 54).*

Capacity building programs in support of social entrepreneurship and community empowerment have not received much attention from federal and provincial government agencies, and perhaps understandably so. Such programs, if they are

[29] R.B. Anderson, L.P. Leo and T.E. Dana (2006), Indigenous Land rights, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development in Canada: "Opting-in" to the Global Economy, *Journal of World Business* 41:45-55.

New institutional arrangements to support the capacity of Aboriginal communities to design and realize a sustainable future need to be created.

to 'fit' socially, culturally and economically with short and long-term community aspirations, should be driven and directed by the Aboriginal community. The approach to capacity advanced in this paper provides one such model to sustaining and empowering Aboriginal peoples and communities in a complementary manner. While funding for Aboriginal capacity building programs that target individuals should be increased substantially, commensurate with the need of Aboriginal communities, new institutional arrangements to support the capacity of Aboriginal communities to design and realize a sustainable future need to be created.

Summary

Current capacity building programs aimed at increasing Aboriginal participation in forestry and other natural resource development sectors represent only a partial and initial first step towards addressing the needs, rights and interests of forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities. "Bottom-up" approaches whereby Aboriginal communities assume ownership, control and responsibility for developing its members' capacities are needed. The latter is not a replacement for, but is complementary to, existing "top-down" approaches. Both approaches are of value to Aboriginal peoples and communities, and should not proceed independently of each other. By way of summarizing the "bottom-up" approach, and in order to assist forest-dependent Aboriginal peoples and communities to get where they want to go and to participate in Canadian society and economy on their terms (i.e. to assist in the reconciliation process), they must have the support to:

1) Document, assess and prioritize Aboriginal uses, values and needs with respect to their forested lands and resources;

2) Develop sustainable economic development, land use management and other plans based upon the community's desired relationship with their lands and resources, and to integrate these plans in a coordinated manner so as to support and achieve the community's vision;

3) Identify the capacity strengths and capacity requirements of community members to achieve this vision, its plans and its constituent components;

4) Identify, develop and negotiate the appropriate institutional frameworks and processes required to implement these plans; and

5) Seek to achieve and implement these capacities so as to sustain and build upon the human, intellectual, economic, social, cultural and natural capitals and assets of Aboriginal communities.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

If what Aboriginal peoples thought they had won had been delivered — a reasonable share of lands and resources for their exclusive use, protection for their traditional economic activities, resource revenues from shared lands, and support for their participation in the new economy being shaped by the settlers, the position of Aboriginal peoples in Canada today would be very different. They would be economically self-reliant. Some would be prosperous (RCAP 1996).[30]

If government promises capacity building, then I want real education and training. But I do not want a government to come and tell our First Nation that we are not ready to participate in economic development, or not ready to exploit our own natural resources, or that we do not know how to responsibly manage our own affairs. Because those things are not true. Those are myths, the lies, the misrepresentations. They are the excuses for keeping things as they are (Matthew Coon Come 2001).[31]

The engagement of Aboriginal peoples in natural resource development and land-use management is a central and complex challenge facing Canada, its forests and its Aboriginal peoples. More than a million Aboriginal people alone live in Canada's boreal forest, where "their identity and relationship to the land is both spiritual and material, not only one of livelihood, but of community and continuity of their cultures and societies" (NRTEE 2005:44).[32] At the same time, unemployment, poverty and birth rates as well as other social and health problems in most forest-dependent Aboriginal communities remain many times the national average. If proactive and coordinated measures — as opposed to reactive and piecemeal actions — are not taken soon to address these problems a social crisis of unimaginable proportions to Canadian society may be the result. The "cost of dependency" is simply not sustainable, acceptable, moral or ethical. The future, and the success of our collective efforts at reconciliation, will likely rest on the ability of "Canadian governments and Aboriginal peoples to cooperatively address the need for significant institutional reform and focused capacity development" (NTREE 2005:44); current institutional arrangements and capacity building initiatives alone are not getting the job done.

The future will likely rest on the ability of "Canadian governments and Aboriginal peoples to cooperatively address the need for significant institutional reform and focused capacity development" (NTREE 2005:44).

The lack of effective institutions to engage Aboriginal peoples and communities in natural resource development and land-use planning is part of the colonial legacy of all Canadians. While comprehensive land claims agreements (modern-day treaties) have begun to enable Aboriginal communities to participate in and benefit from natural resource development and land-use planning, these institutions are, for the most part, restricted to the northern parts of Canada. Many forest-dependent First Nations communities are covered by historic treaties that provide little direction to their signatories regarding the participation of Aboriginal peoples in the sustainable development of Canada's natural resources. Against this background, governments continue to narrowly construe the rights of First Nation and Métis peoples, while granting rights to third party interests (forestry, mining

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[30] Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), three volumes.

[31] M. Coon Come (2001). Capacity Building in First Nations. In *Aboriginal Forestry 2001: Capacity Building, Partnerships, Business Development, and Opportunities for Aboriginal Youth*, Proceedings of the Conference of the First Nations Forest Program, Saskatoon, 21-24 January 2001.

[32] *Boreal Futures: Governance, Conservation and Development in Canada's Boreal*, National Round Table on the Environment and Economy (2005)

and energy companies) to explore for and develop natural resources on Aboriginal territories. As Aboriginal peoples assert their rights and as conservation issues intensify, the potential for conflict is great. A key challenge for all governments, including Aboriginal governments, is the creation of institutions that will give Aboriginal and treaty rights substance and effect on a day-to-day basis, and provide Aboriginal peoples with the opportunity and support to design and realize a sustainable future on terms and conditions acceptable to them.

Strengthening Support for Existing Programs

Other than land claims settlements and the consultation policies of a few provinces, the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in resource planning and management institutions is limited. In this regard, some government-sponsored programs (e.g., FNFP, BEAHR) aim to build Aboriginal peoples' capacities to participate not only in existing economic development/employment opportunities, but in current resource planning and management processes. These programs, however, remain under-funded and require much greater resourcing to meet the short-term needs of Aboriginal communities to effectively represent their rights and interests in existing land-use planning, management and economic development initiatives.

The importance of building Aboriginal capacities in land-use management and governance has been highlighted by many sources, including the National Round Table on the Environment and Economy (NRTEE 2005, Recommendation #7):

> A major challenge to the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in the future of the boreal is the limited capacity at the community level to participate effectively in management and planning processes related to resource development and conservation. Currently, Aboriginal communities are characterized as having scarce technical, human and financial resources: low levels of educational attainment; and a small base of professional and technical expertise upon which to draw. These concerns about limited capacity are compounded by the increasing demands for consultation being placed on Aboriginal communities… Federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments and society organizations should support capacity-building of Aboriginal communities, enabling to effectively manage their interests in the boreal.

NAFA[33] advocates that Aboriginal forest management capacity is dependent on the **implementation of institutional arrangements that entrench and support Aboriginal values and rights**. However, with the possible exception of several modern day treaties, such institutional arrangements do not currently exist, and the development of Aboriginal capacities to determine their future is significantly constrained. NAFA also suggests that **capacity building is broader than human resource development of individuals, and that individual needs should fit within an overall system in which the collective needs of the Aboriginal community are addressed**. However, most government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity building programs related to forestry and natural resource extraction endeavour to improve the skills and qualifications of individuals to find employment in existing economic development and management opportunities. This is a laudable and worthwhile objective, and because Aboriginal communities and First Nation

Existing programs remain under-funded and require much greater resourcing to meet the short-term needs of Aboriginal communities to effectively represent their rights and interests.

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[33] H. Bombay (2007), *NAFA's Aboriginal Capacity Building Initiatives.*

governments have much to gain by participating in existing economic and institutional arrangements, financial support for these programs should be increased substantially to meet current demands.

Rationalizing the Need for New Institutions and Approaches to Building and Implementing Capacity in Aboriginal Communities

Increased support for existing capacity building initiatives alone is not sufficient. Nor is it likely to produce the conditions that will allow Aboriginal communities to find the right formula to sustain their cultures, societies, values and desired relationships with their lands and resources. Canada is an experiment in cultural diversity and sustainability that few other countries have attempted, and fewer have succeeded at. Current Aboriginal capacity building programs and institutions, however, contribute little to the success of the reconciliation project. Canada needs to create institutional arrangements with its Aboriginal peoples that enable them to participate in Canadian economy and society on their terms and conditions, or at least on terms and conditions that are negotiated, not unilaterally set by one party.

Aboriginal peoples and communities need, and in many cases already possess, the capacities to participate in the design of such institutions. However, the institutions and rules of engagement in which Aboriginal peoples must participate have already been created to serve the political, economic, environmental and other agendas of Canada's non-Aboriginal community. **It is in the context of true reconciliation, creating new institutional initiatives that Aboriginal peoples and communities may have the greatest opportunity to plan their future, and to assess and implement their capacity needs and strengths to get there.**

It would seem that existing institutional arrangements and Aboriginal capacity building programs are too constrained by current government policies and economic initiatives to achieve reconciliation. Existing institutions and capacity programs can perhaps be tweaked or expanded to better address the immediate needs of Aboriginal peoples. However, the creation of a new Aboriginal capacity building initiative tied to the development of more effective institutional arrangements between Canada and its Aboriginal peoples, whereby Aboriginal communities would assume ownership, responsibility and control of their capacity development, and have access to financial and other resources to do so, would seem a more appropriate and effective strategy. Before this can happen, Aboriginal and First Nations leaders need to initiate and participate in a dialogue to reach consensus on the most appropriate and effective course of action to empower and sustain their communities.

Building Aboriginal capacity and creating effective institutional arrangements must go hand in hand. It is not enough for Aboriginal peoples to develop capacities to participate in existing political and economic arrangements created by the Crown. Such arrangements are not particularly adaptive, nor are they shining examples of reconciliation or of integrating multiple values and ways of knowing, though an increasingly smaller minority would argue otherwise. Rather, they are part of the colonial legacy of all Canadians that began with the first comprehensive land claims agreements in the mid-1970s. The general terms and conditions of such institutional arrangements, including the rules, language and concepts of discourse, were set by Canada, leaving Aboriginal parties to figure out, often with the assistance of legal experts with little understanding of Aboriginal cultures and perspectives, how to best fit their values, understandings, rights and interests into this new currency.

Canada needs to create institutional arrangements with its Aboriginal peoples that enable them to participate in Canadian economy and society on terms and conditions that are set by both parties.

Building Aboriginal capacity and creating effective institutional arrangements must go hand in hand.

Nation-to-nation relationships must be negotiated in an environment of mutual respect and equality. Ideally, negotiated institutions would integrate multiple ways of knowing, and "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches. Creating integrated and adaptive institutions of "know what" (knowledge) and "know how" (practice), however, requires an examination of social, decision-making and learning processes at play, including the myth, value, belief and power systems at work, and how these interact with one another to produce a range of outcomes (Wilkinson et al 2007).[34]

But integration and adaptation will not happen by themselves; "they require motivated people, with awareness of their own standpoints and biases, a commitment to mutual respect and the skills to find common ground" (Wilkinson et al 2007). If Aboriginal forest-dependent communities are going to be sustainable, these are capacities that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants involved will need as they seek to create new institutions and programs. If developing new institutions that integrate diverse views and knowledge into democratic, adaptive learning processes is a means for Aboriginal communities to achieve sustainability, we must come to grips with the "blind spots" and "sound bytes" that undermine this goal (Wilkinson et al 2007).

Blind Spots and Sound Bytes: Barriers to Reconciliation

Behind every quest for sustainability, every conservation effort, lies one fundamental problem: "How do we create and sustain a healthy relationship with our world" (Doremus 2000, Doob 1995, Wilkinson et al 2007).[35] Positivistic science and the view that it should have a privileged role in society, policy and practice because of its "objectivity" have become "institutionalized" in government practice. There is nothing inherently wrong with the scientific method; science is an insightful and self-correcting tool (Wilkinson et al 2007). However, those who subscribe to it often dismiss the knowledge and views of others who do not. Often this is done unintentionally, even unconsciously, by well-meaning professionals. However, those who champion the scientific method in their interactions with Aboriginal peoples might do well to remember that all knowledge is culturally constructed and replete with biases and assumptions, even (and some would say, especially) western science. Science is just one of many ways to organize experience and create understanding, and that no one knowledge system has a monopoly on the "truth", or the right way to achieve a sustainable relationship with the world (Wilkinson et al 2007). All viewpoints and knowledge systems are needed, and should to be brought to bear, in a respectful and complementary manner, to address the challenges at hand.

This superiority of "science" is reinforced by other "blind spots" that

- view humans as external (i.e., as a disturbance or outlier) to "natural systems";
- believe humans can control and manage "nature", and that we have sufficient means and knowledge to do so; and

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[34] K.M. Wilkinson, S.G. Clark and W.R. Burch (2007), *Other Voices, Other Ways, Better Practices: Bridging Local and Professional Environmental Knowledge*, Yale University of Forestry and Environmental Studies Bulletin 14.

[35] L.W. Doob (1995), *Sustainers and Sustainability: Attitudes, Attributes and Actions*, Pralleger, Westport, CT; H. Doremus (2000), The Rhetoric and Reality of Nature Protection: Toward a New Discourse. *Washington and Lee law Review*, Winter 2000, 57(1):11-73.

- perceive environmental change and ecological flux as disorder, i.e., something to be corrected and managed to achieve some level of ecological stability (Stevenson 2006).[36]

Together with concepts and language embedded in the Canadian legal system, these "blind spots" have strongly influenced the design of comprehensive land claims agreements and other arrangements with Canada's Aboriginal peoples involving their lands and resources, especially the rules of engagement and operation. Together, they form a formidable barrier to true reconciliation and to effective Aboriginal participation in the common quest to develop a sustainable relationship with the world. Every time a wildlife manager, environmentalist, research scientist or Aboriginal representative uncritically employs language and concepts born in the currency of the conservation bureaucracy, s/he:

- favours the interests of existing social, political and economic arrangements;
- denies the fundamental rights of Aboriginal peoples to self-determination (Stevenson 2006:175); and
- hinders the quest to develop a sustainable relationship with the world.

Aboriginal peoples involved in natural resource development and management discourses are not immune to "blind spots." The notions that Aboriginal peoples are "conservationists" or that they once lived in harmony with nature have been promoted by Aboriginal spokespersons. Far from being conservationists, indigenous peoples have been known to overexploit resources, even to the point of extirpation (Stevenson 2006:168). The idea of conservation, that restraint today will be rewarded in the future, has strong underpinnings in western religious and capitalist thought and tradition. To the extent that Aboriginal peoples managed or conserved anything, it was their "relationships" to their lands and resources, and themselves. Relationships, not specific resources, habitats or even ecosystems were the focus of management and the nexus around which Aboriginal peoples traditionally constructed their knowledge systems and implemented their management systems and practices (Stevenson 2006: 169).

Another "blind spot" that Aboriginal peoples sometimes harbour in natural resource development and management discourses is the promotion and advocacy of Aboriginal (and treaty) rights in the absence any discussion about Aboriginal "responsibilities." Provincial and federal governments have been slow in translating Aboriginal rights into the design of new policies and institutions that would facilitate the meaningful participation of Aboriginal peoples in addressing the sustainability challenge.[37] What is needed is a new discourse that clarifies the responsibilities that attend those rights. Aboriginal rights and responsibilities are two sides of the same coin. Yet, somewhere, somehow in the discussions leading to the drafting of Section 35 of the *Canadian Constitution Act of 1982*, the concept of Aboriginal "responsibilities" fell off the table. Continued assertion of Aboriginal rights in the absence clarifying Aboriginal and government responsibilities, and designing institutions that accommodate them is a "blind spot" that will continue to hinder Aboriginal peoples quest for the recognition of their rights and for reconciliation. A focus on responsibilities has the potential to foster a mutually cooperative and respectful exploration of strategies and institutions that will allow the rights and responsibilities of both Aboriginal communities and individual Canadians to be exercised.

[36] Stevenson, M.G. (2006). The Possibility of Difference: Rethinking Co-management, *Human Organization* 65(2): 167-180.

[37] British Columbia's "new relationship" policy is an exception and appears to be a step in the right direction. The real challenge in BC will be translate this new policy into practice.

Certain "blind spots" have strongly influenced the design of comprehensive land claims agreements and other arrangements with Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

Aboriginal peoples involved in natural resource development and management discourses are not immune to "blind spots."

With Aboriginal rights comes responsibilities.

In existing institutions and approaches to Aboriginal capacity building, the problems identified and solutions sought are framed by those in/with power. In an effort to make problems and solutions tractable, well intentioned professionals often oversimplify complex realities (Wilkinson et al 2007), rendering initiatives far less effective than initially anticipated. By narrowing focus, decoupling relationships among otherwise interdependent variables, their efforts have a greater chance at being rewarded, as least by the system that sets the rules. However, anytime we reduce the complex world around us to a tractable problem or area of specific concern, we put "blinders" on. With its focus on enhancing the capacities of Aboriginal peoples to engage in existing employment opportunities in the economic development and management of forests, this is what has happened to Aboriginal capacity building agenda in the forestry sector.

The myths that underpin this approach are many. Myths are the stories we tell ourselves about how the world is or ought to be, and translate easily into metaphors. Botkin (1990)[38] argues that it is not a shortage of technical or scientific knowledge that hinders our ability to perceive and constructively address key issues, it is the underlying myths and metaphors that shape our understandings. In the realm of Aboriginal capacity building, these metaphors can be translated into "sound bytes", some of which are echoed in Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come's comments:

- We are all the same!
- What's good for us, is good for you!
- To be successful, you need to become more like us!
- You are not yet ready to be like us, you need training, you need patience!
- Once you are like us, then we will be partners!
- If we build it, you will come, and if you don't, it's not our fault, it's yours!

Current government sponsored approaches to Aboriginal capacity building in the forest and natural resource development and management sectors run the risk of becoming stuck in their own unexamined myths, metaphors and sound bytes, thus limiting their effectiveness and ability to perceive, understand and engage in effective dialogue about the central challenges at hand. To maximize effectiveness, existing approaches must be construed within, and become an integral component of, a broader, more comprehensive Aboriginal capacity building project that possesses the types of characteristics identified in this paper. Barriers must be overcome in order to achieve this objective.

The key to successful joint problem identification and solving is to recognize the strengths and limitations of the focus each may have and to create processes and institutions wherein multiple voices, methods and streams of understanding are valued and considered (Wilkinson et al 2007). Institutions that set the stage for effective dialogue among different cultures and knowledge systems maximize the opportunity for more holistic identification and understanding of the problems faced, and the solutions needed to resolve them. Such institutions can only be created out of negotiation whereby mutual respect, equality of voice and consensus are achieved in a common quest to develop a sustainable relationship with the world.

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[38] D. Botkin (1990), Discordant Harmonies: A New Ecology for the 21st Century, Oxford University Press, New York.

The benefits of viable and effective institutions and capacity building programs that create the space for Aboriginal communities to plan their future and set the stage to get there are considerable. While each Aboriginal community will likely differ with respect to their formulae for social, cultural, and economic sustainability, communities with a common vision and a sense of purpose know what they must do and are proactive. Strong, vibrant Aboriginal communities, such as might be predicted by those with high "bonding" and "linking" capitals (Section 4), are also capable of engaging industry, governments and others on an equal footing.[39] They make good partners, are resilient to change and are more likely to negotiate rules of engagement that nurture and sustain viable economic, political and other arrangements with non-Aboriginals so as to create win-win situations for both community and outside interests. They are more apt to identify and address their capacity needs and strengths, and to achieve a sustainable future, independent of government relief and support. Multiplied by several hundred communities, representing well over a million Aboriginal people, the cost savings alone to Canadian taxpayers could be in the billions of dollars annually, freeing up monies for other initiatives. Strong, viable forest-dependent Aboriginal communities may also serve to ground Aboriginal peoples in urban environments to their history, culture, value systems and communities, thus contributing to their survival in the multicultural fabric of Canada's cities and building a strong bridge between on-reserve and off-reserve Aboriginal populations.

Substantial environmental benefits may also be an outcome of integral, vibrant, sustainable Aboriginal communities. Biological and cultural diversity are positively correlated (Stevenson and Webb 2004, Turner et al 2003, among others).[40] Where indigenous peoples, communities and governments are strong, their relationships to their lands and resources, which depend on and indeed sustain biological diversity, are also strong. It has also been demonstrated that countries with marked economic disparity, such as in highly industrialized nation states, demonstrate a significantly greater loss of biodiversity (Mikkelson et al. 2007),[41] and we would argue cultural diversity, than countries where wealth is more evenly distributed.

It is particularly important that all members of Aboriginal communities (women, men, elders, youth, etc.) have a strong voice in planning their collective and individual futures, including the identification of their capacity needs and strengths to get there. All voices must be represented and appropriately accommodated within community visioning/ planning/capacity identification exercises, lest one agenda comes to dominate others. Strategies for sustainability must embrace the complexity and articulation of ecological, economic, social, and cultural and other needs of people within Aboriginal communities at all scales (individual, family, group, community). A focus on one dimension (e.g., economic vs ecological) or scale of sustainability (individual vs community, etc.) at the risk of not considering others will also not likely be viable over the long term. Where they do not exist, skill sets need to be developed within Aboriginal communities to ensure that all dimensions and scales of sustainability are appropriately considered, accommodated and integrated on the path to a sustainable future.

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[39] Aboriginal communities that score low in both types of social capital may be incapable of maintaining sustainable relationships with their lands, resources and with others. The future of such communities is strongly vested in the status quo and left in the hands of others.

[40] M.G. Stevenson and J. Webb (2004), First Nations: Measures and Monitors of Boreal Forest Biodiversity, *Ecological Bulletins* 51:83-92; N.J. Turner, I.J. Davidson-Hunt and M. O'Flaherty (2003), Living on the Edge: Ecological and Cultural Edges of Diversity for Socio-ecological resilience, *Human Ecology* 31(3): 439-461.

[41] G. M. Mikkelson, A. Gonzalez and G. D. Peterson (2007), Economic Inequality Predicts Biodiversity Loss, *PLoS One*, wwwplosone.org, May/Issue 5 444:1-5.

Even though conventional Aboriginal capacity building programs are based on the myths and metaphors of non-Aboriginal society, they do have something to offer; sometimes showing up in a community with the answer provides some benefits. This is an interim fix and not the ultimate solution to the many challenges and problems faced by forest-dependent Aboriginal communities. There is a need for innovative approaches to Aboriginal capacity building that are driven from the "ground-up," that articulate with conventional "top-down" programs, that seek to accommodate all dimensions and scales of sustainability. Innovative capacity building programs, and the institutions that support them, position and work with communities to identify the problems and design appropriate responses on their path to sustainability.

Recommendations

> *(That) is what I would call real 'capacity building', building a land and resource base that will create sustainable economies for First Nations (Matthew Coon Come 2001).*

In the absence of recognizing and accommodating the rights of Aboriginal peoples to greater access to and control over their lands and resources, it would seem doubtful, regardless of the capacity building initiative undertaken, whether reconciliation will occur or whether First Nations communities will ever become self-sustaining, and thus true partners in confederation. In this regard, the RCAP report (1996) recommended that "*federal, provincial and territorial governments, through negotiation…provide Aboriginal nations with lands that are sufficient in size and quality to foster Aboriginal economic self-reliance and cultural and political autonomy.*" While this happened to some extent in the northern areas of Canada through the negotiation of comprehensive land claims agreements, with a few exceptions (e.g., Nisga'a Final Agreement) it has not happened in other parts of Canada where competition for resources by third party interests and population densities are higher.

Figure 5. The interrelationship of existing Aboriginal capacity building initiatives, new institutional relationships between Canada and its Aboriginal peoples, and a new Aboriginal capacity building initiative.

Existing Aboriginal Capacity Building Programs

New Aboriginal Capacity Building Initiative

New Institutional Arrangements and Relationships
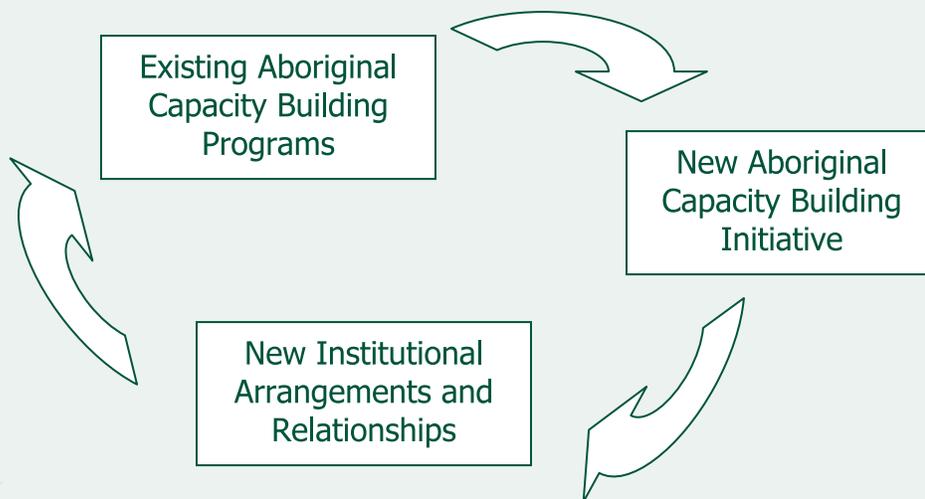
The creation of new Aboriginal capacity building initiatives must be tied to existing programs and the creation of new institutional relationships that provide Aboriginal peoples and communities with increased rights of access to their lands and resources and revenue sharing (Figure 5). These are matters to be negotiated between the Aboriginal leaders of this country and relevant government authorities. In the interim we offer the following broad recommendations principally to Canada's Aboriginal leaders, communities and governments — without their roles as "champions", these initiatives will go nowhere. We also offer them to the federal, provincial and territorial governments and other organizations and agencies with a vested interest in seeing that Aboriginal peoples and communities becoming self-sustaining, true partners in confederation, and participants in a process of reconciliation that will lead us collectively to develop a sustainable relationship with our natural resources:

1) Aboriginal peoples, communities and governments alone must own the processes of determining their capacity needs and requirements, and of implementing their existing capacity strengths, and this must be done in such a way as enhance community rights, interests, goals and aspirations.

2) Resourcing (finances, logistical/administrative support and other resources) for existing government-sponsored Aboriginal capacity and infrastructure building programs relating to forestry and natural resource development (operational activities, market research and entry, forest use planning and management, etc.) should be increased substantially, commensurate with the needs of Canada's forest-dependent Aboriginal communities.

3) In consideration of this paper's findings, a new government-funded Aboriginal capacity building program should be created to provide funding and administrative support to forest-dependent Aboriginal communities and governments to undertake the community-driven research, planning and visioning exercises necessary to achieve sustainability. This initiative should be tied to existing Aboriginal capacity building programs and actively support Crown government-Aboriginal negotiations and initiatives to accommodate the rights of Aboriginal peoples to their lands and resources. The building blocks of any new Aboriginal capacity initiative needs to be negotiated on a nation-nation basis, and embrace the concept of reconciliation.

4) In the spirit of reconciliation, an Aboriginal Natural Resources Research and Policy Institute should be created with the federal and provincial assistance in order to provide the balanced research and policy analysis needed to inform the development and implementation of new Aboriginal capacity initiatives (modeled after the approach advocated in this paper) and the development of new institutional arrangements that provide Aboriginal peoples and communities with greater access to their lands and resources. In particular, federal and provincial government policies and regulations related to natural resources need to be amended where required to facilitate Aboriginal peoples' journey away from dependency to self-sufficiency.

New Aboriginal capacity building initiatives must be tied to existing programs and the creation of new institutional relationships that provide Aboriginal peoples and communities with increased rights of access to their lands and resources and revenue sharing.

Aboriginal Natural Resources Research and Policy Institute should be created with the federal and provincial assistance in order to provide the balanced research and policy analysis needed to inform the development and implementation of new Aboriginal capacity initiatives.

5) Industry and government should assess their capacity strengths and weaknesses to accommodate Aboriginal needs, rights and interests in the context of natural resource development and sustainable land-use planning and management, and, where appropriate, undertake measures to address capacity deficiencies.

6) Relevant post-secondary educational institutions need to re-design and develop programs and courses that create the space for the equitable and meaningful participation of Aboriginal peoples and communities in the forest/natural resource development and management sectors. Curricula should be developed that include a heavy dose of social forestry and provide students (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) with the necessary tools to challenge the values and assumptions of conventional forest science, policy and economics.

APPENDIX A

Government Programs Supporting Aboriginal Capacity in the Forest Sector

The First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP)

Jointly funded by Natural Resource Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs, the First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) provides funding and support to First Nations peoples to improve their capacity to develop and sustainably manage their forest resources and to participate in and benefit from forest-based employment and business opportunities. The purpose of the program is to improve economic conditions in status First Nation communities with full consideration of the principles of sustainable forest management. The program has been actively funding forestry ventures and opportunities for First Nations communities Canada-wide since 1996, and in its first 10 years, provided over $21 million of support. Approximately 165 community capacity building projects are funded annually with an average value of ca. $20K per project (Wilson 2007).[42] First Nations generally provide the "lions share" of project funding, followed by contributions of other partners.

The FNFP has funded projects in four general areas (Wilson 2007):

- Sustainable Forest Management (38%); forest management plans, inventories, silviculture activities, traditional land use studies (TLUS), innovative technologies.
- Training and Capacity Building (35%); harvesting skills, silviculture skills, forest management skills, negotiations skills.
- Forest-based Business Development (24%); feasibility plans, business plans, partnership agreements, joint ventures, market analysis.
- Access to Resources (3%); negotiations, co-management, crown land tenure acquisition, forest licenses.

In a recent evaluation of the FNFP (NRCan 2006),[43] it was concluded that the program has "developed a strong pool of experienced individuals and talent within First Nations that collectively have the abilities to make significant inroads on sustainable forest management both on and off reserve." However, FNFP achievements were regarded to be "at the low end of the delivery curve," and may, in fact, "be set back without increased support in building and enhancing delivery-based infrastructures within First Nations." It was concluded that stronger links to other federal and provincial capacity initiatives (e.g., the Model Forest Program and the Community Economic Development Program) and with First Nations governance in the provinces/territories are needed. It was thought also that the program in its present form may be at a plateau and the time has come to move to the next level. The renewal plan for the FNFP is due in 2008, and will hopefully situate a new, revitalized FNFP within a broader national Aboriginal capacity strategy for First Nation communities.

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[42] B. Wilson (2007), *First Nations Forestry Program: Trends, Opportunities and Lessons Learned*, Presentation at the First Nations Forestry Program Meeting, Enoch, Alberta, 8 May 2007.

[43] Ibid.

Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP)[44]

The ASEP is a five-year initiative (2004-2008) with total funding of $85 million from HRDC, and is geared to providing Aboriginal peoples with the skills and work experience they need to participate in employment opportunities in forestry, northern mining, oil and gas, construction and hydroelectric development projects across Canada. The program operates on a collaborative partnership basis with significant funding expected from the private sector, Aboriginal groups and the province or territory. ASEP funding requirements stipulate comprehensive "training-to-employment" plans that link Aboriginal skills development to specific job opportunities. The plan covers a broad continuum ranging from basic skills, literacy, academic upgrading, job-specific training and apprenticeships, to retention counseling while on the job.

In light of current skill levels, many Aboriginal employment opportunities on large economic development or resource-based projects are limited initially to entry level and semi-skilled jobs. However, there is an expectation of continuous skill development and the potential for advancement within projects. Incorporated organizations applying for ASEP funding must show that they can provide a minimum of 50 long-term jobs for Aboriginal peoples. To date, nine ASEP projects have received multi-year funding ranging from $2.8 to $22 million. These projects are expected to result in over 5,000 Aboriginal peoples being trained for over 3,000 long-term jobs. Of particular interest, is the ASEP forestry project in New Brunswick, where Aboriginal peoples have been allocated a 5% share of the province's timber supply. The primary objective of the five-year project (2004-2008) is the training and placement of 100 full-time seasonal silviculture workers, 48 truck-transportation drivers, 24 heavy equipment operators, and six business management professionals. A secondary objective is to provide forestry employment-related training and upgrading for 700 Aboriginal workers.

In July of 2007, the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development renewed the ASEP for another five years (2008-2013) with an investment of $105 million. Many of the mandatory requirements remain with federal funding now limited to 50% of the total costs of each program.

Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR)[45]

In 2001, the BEAHR initiative was created to enhance inclusion of Aboriginal practitioners in the environment sector. The BEAHR program adds the elements of traditional knowledge and work experience on traditional lands to mainstream environmental approaches and facilitates career awareness and opportunities in environmental sector. The BEAHR internship program provides employer's with a wage subsidy of up to 33% for 6-12 months to employ Aboriginal peoples in environmental protection, conservation of natural resources and environmental education, communications and research. The rationale of this program is grounded in the projections that, between 2001 and 2016, nearly 200,000 new jobs will be created in Canada's environmental sector, and that 400,000 Aboriginal youth will be entering the workforce. BEAHR looks to increase Aboriginal participation in the environment sector by 6,000 new positions by 2016, and:

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[44] www.hrsdc.gc.ca

[45] http://www.beahr.com/documents

- Create an awareness of environmental careers among Aboriginal communities,
- Support Aboriginal peoples' development in the environmental sector,
- Become the premier source for environmental employment resources, and
- Recognize and support environmental excellence in the Aboriginal community, education, and industry.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Programs

The federal Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs is responsible for the majority of funding and program delivery related to capacity building for Aboriginal peoples living on reserves. The following selection of programs targets the natural resource or environment sector specifically[46], but is by no means exhaustive.

Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Program (CEDP)[47]

In June 1989 the Government of Canada initiated the Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy to address the economic disparities between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians, and to help Aboriginal peoples achieve economic self-reliance. Community Economic Development Organizations (CEDOs) are the primary vehicles used to implement Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC) responsibilities for community economic development. CEDOs were created to provide a local institutional base to build long-term development capacity at the community level; over the past decade, many reports have called for new institutions to promote capacity building to assist Aboriginal peoples to increase technical and governance skills. CEDOs use federal funds to:

- develop community economic strategic plans;
- provide advisory services;
- plan resource business or resource development projects;
- provide contributions, repayable contributions or loans to community members for training, business or resource development projects;
- hold equity positions in private or community enterprises;
- provide job-related training and employment programs; and
- manage financial and technical services.

In 2001-2002, CEDP core funding averaged approximately $100K annually per recipient organization: with tribal council organizations receiving $312K annually and smaller communities $34K annually. Many CEDOs focus on increasing local labour employability and participation in the labour force, with 26-32 % of the CEDP annual expenditures allocated to training.

Although measures to evaluate gains in these areas are lacking, over 80% of those interviewed in the INAC evaluation of the CEDP believed that the CEDOs had improved their employees' skills and their organizational capacity to promote employment and foster economic development. For instance, the Heart Lake First Nation in northern Alberta used CEDP resources to develop profitable relationships with private firms in the forestry sector and a non-Aboriginal heavy equipment company to advance its business opportunities. Many stakeholders commented on the importance of CEDP funds being predictable and the program more flexible and simpler. Subsequently, new economic development programs were introduced, effective April 1, 2005, to allow Aboriginal communities to seize

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[46] INAC has contributed both human and financial resources to the development of many of the programs and initiatives mentioned in this section.

[47] INAC (2003), *Evaluation of the Community Economic Development Program*, Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, September 2003. http://www.aincinac. gc.ca/pr/pub/ae/ev/01-08/index_e.html.

and sustain economic and employment opportunities through strategic investments in economic infrastructure, capacity-building and development of land and natural resources at the community level.

In conjunction with the CEDP, a new Community Economic Opportunities Program (CEOP) was initiated. This program provides project-based support to address human resources development planning and employment activities, development of community-owned and community member businesses, development of land and resources under community control, access to opportunities from off-reserve lands and resources, promotion of investment in the community, research and advocacy, and advisory services to community members in relation to economic opportunities.

Environmental Capacity Development Initiative (ECDI)

Environment Canada prepared its first sustainable development strategy in 1997 with the intention of increasing the agency's understanding of Aboriginal peoples' interests and needs, including traditional ecological knowledge.[48] In implementing this strategy, Environment Canada focused on three core areas: 1) governance (capacity for appropriate policy and decision making), 2) science and technology (making best use of expertise) and 3) partnerships (engaging society). In collaboration with INAC, Environment Canada sought to deliver the Environmental Capacity Development Initiative (ECDI), which was designed to:

- Help improve public health and safety;
- Protect the natural environment; and
- Support the development, management and utilization of traditional ecological knowledge.

These goals were expected to be achieved through the development of capacity in environmental stewardship, specifically in areas relating to the development of environmental protection regimes, conserving biodiversity, waste management, air and water quality management and environmental emergency awareness. Other relevant initiatives also developed and implemented by Environment Canada under the ECDI include:

- Providing a three year funding commitment to the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources,[49] an existing non-profit Aboriginal organization specializing in environmental service delivery, training and research;
- Departmental workshops on Aboriginal law to educate Environment Canada employees on recent developments in Aboriginal law and policy;
- Consultations with Aboriginal people across the country on the development of the new Species at Risk Act; and
- A guide on traditional knowledge prepared by an Aboriginal steering committee.

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[48] Environment Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy 1997-2000. http://www.ec.gc.ca/sddd_consult/final/SDGTOC_E.HTM

[49] www.cier.ca

Aboriginal Skills Development Program (ASDP) — Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP)

The ASDP-FSWEP program facilitates opportunities for Aboriginal students to work within INAC and other federal government departments and gain valuable experience and training, some related to forestry and the environment. This program grew out of a 1994 commitment by INAC to a 50 % Aboriginal hiring strategy. The intention of this strategy is to achieve an INAC workforce that is "culturally sensitive and representative of its Aboriginal/Inuit partners while supporting the continued focus on strengthening self-governance within First Nations."[50] INAC has had an Aboriginal Student Program in place since 1986 and many students found employment in federal departments. An expressed goal of this program is to interest academically successful Aboriginal students in working within the federal public service after graduation from a post-secondary institution.

Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environments (ACADRE)[51]

There is a strong link between Aboriginal health and environmental health, especially in rural, northern forest-dependent communities. While ACADRE is not a program that tends to fund Aboriginal forest-related initiatives directly, research being undertaken by various ACADREs on Aboriginal health issues may be relevant to Aboriginal engagement in the forest and natural resource development sectors. As one of its first initiatives, the CIHR-Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health established a number of ACADRE centres across Canada to facilitate the development of Aboriginal capacity in health research. ACADRE centres focus solely on exploring critical Aboriginal health issues and are the initial links in what will become a network of centres across Canada responsible for developing the next generation of Aboriginal health researchers and for focused research efforts on determinants of health in Aboriginal communities.

The research of the Alberta ACADRE Network in Edmonton has evolved in a responsive manner through collaborative community partnerships and research requests. Research themes identified by communities that will guide and enhance the work of the Alberta Network over the next three years include:

- traditional knowledge and ethics,
- northern community environmental health,
- community access to health services, and
- Aboriginal capacity development initiatives.

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[50] www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/aw/ase_e.html

[51] http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/27071.html

APPENDIX B

Local Aboriginal Efforts to Build Capacity in the Forest Sector

Case Study 1: The Little Red River Cree Nation

The Little Red River Cree Nation (LRRCN) occupies the lower Peace River watershed in northern Alberta. The LRRCN number about 4,500 people, 87% of whom live in John D'or Prairie, Fox Lake and Garden River. Unemployment averages 90% and about 70% of all households receive social assistance. Average household income is $19,000, with about nine in each household. As a family of four spends 98% of its welfare allowance on food (Lawn 2001)[52], over 80% of all households rely heavily on the "bush economy" to survive. The average economic contribution of bush commodities is about $5,000 per household.

The nation signed Treaty 8 in 1899 on the understanding that it would share its lands and resources with settlers, while retaining the right to pursue their usual vocations of hunting, trapping, fishing and trading within lands not taken up for settlement. The nation has tried to convince the federal and provincial governments that this agreement has to be honoured in such a way as to not undermine Cree uses and relationships with the forest. The ongoing failure of the Crown to honour its treaty commitments has shaped and defined the Nation's engagement with government and industry. Both are viewed as potential allies and adversaries, depending on the context, on the nation's path back to self-sufficiency and self-determination (Stevenson and Webb 2003).[53]

About 20 years ago, the LRRCN made a strategic decision to engage the provincial government in a process to regain influence over resource use planning, management and development on its traditional lands. As part of this process, Little Red River Forestry Ltd. (LRRF) was born. Later, in 1995, a co-operative agreement was established, grounded in the award of a large forest tenure within a 35,000 square kilometer "Special Management Area" (SMA). Within its planning mandate, the Cooperative Management Planning Board was to consider the social, cultural, ecological and economic aspects of the planning landscape, and use this information to:

- Establish resource use priorities, objectives and guidelines compatible with the principles of sustainable development and traditional uses of the Cree,
- Identify special initiatives for sustaining wildlife and habitat in the SMA, and
- Identify economic, employment and training initiatives for nations' members.

The LRRCN (together with the neighboring Tallcree First Nation) currently hold tenures of 750,000 m3 annually. As a condition of these tenures, the LRRCN signed timber supply agreements with two companies (Tolko Industries Ltd. and Footner Forest Products), both of whom agreed to transfer woodlands management

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[52] J. Lawn (2001), *Food Costs in Treaty 8 Communities in Northern Alberta, Northern River Basins Food Consumption Study*, Alberta Treaty 8 Health Authority.

[53] M.G. Stevenson and J. Webb (2003), Just Another Stakeholder? First Nations and Sustainable Forest Management in the Boreal Forest. In *Towards Sustainable Management in the Boreal Forest*, P.G. Burton, C. Messier, D.W. Smith and V. Adamowicz (editors), NRC Press, pp 65-112.

responsibility to LRRF and institute capacity development initiatives in woodland-based employment and business opportunities. These agreements had the potential to create upwards of 300 jobs for First Nations members in woodlands operations and management (KPMG 1998).[54]

The LRRCN has relied on a number of capacity-building programs and initiatives to prepare its members for participation in the forest sector. The greatest "capacity building" successes have been in operations relating to fire fighting and tree planting (Bryant Johns, personal communication, March 2007). Up until last year, 3-4 crews of about eight members (n = 25-30) worked 4-6 months a year fighting fires and combating insect (spruce beetle) infestations. Another 60 or so people were engaged in tree planting and other silvicultural operations. Seven First Nation members were also permanently employed as forest technicians, where they were directly involved in organizing and overseeing work crews, addressing referrals, etc. Joint ventures with existing woodland operators were designed to train and employ First Nation members and to support sub-contracted owner-operator initiatives, e.g., 30 band members were trained as truck operators for winter logging operations. Kayas Cultural College provides for the adult and post-secondary education and training needs of the LRRCN while addressing the Cree language and cultural concerns. In support of the "training for forest employment" needs of band members, Kayas has developed a three week training and certification course in silvicultural practices.

In October of 2005, LRRF Woodlands division paid put more than $1 million in salaries to 165 band members employed in various activities. Each year between 1995 and 2005, the LRRCN derived revenues of ca. $2-2.5 million by selling coniferous timber harvests to the two forest companies, and more recently, Ainsworth Lumber Co. Ltd. These revenues went into band coffers to fund a variety of programs and services. However, the LRRCN band members have not embraced forestry to the extent that its forest tenures and timber supply agreements would have anticipated. The reasons for this, as with many Aboriginal contexts, are complex and varied.

First, the province of Alberta has walked away from the cooperative management table. Disagreements over matters of process and objections raised by non-Aboriginal interests continue to undermine any chance of resurrecting this process (although at the time of printing the authors have learned that LRRCN and the province are back at the bargaining table). Second, the decline in the market for softwood lumber has forced LRRF to scale down its woodlands and management operations. Finally, changes in the nation's political leadership has forced LRRF to adopt a "business as usual" (BAU) approach to forestry. Despite a considerable legacy of research (much of it undertaken in cooperation with the SFM Network) to accommodate and address the socio-cultural, economic and ecological requirements of the LRRCN, a standard business model of forestry has emerged. This has resulted in a reduction from 22 to 11 full-time staff, forcing the LRRF into "survival mode" (Ben Secker, pers. comm., April 2007). Today, only about 7-8 band members find employment in woodlands operations as operators of heavy equipment (graders, skidders, etc.), and virtually none of the 30 or so band members who trained as log haul truck drivers are employed in that profession.

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[54] KPMG (1998), *Forest Business Incubator Centre: Business Plan.* Report prepared for the Little Red River Cree Nation, John D'or Prairie.

The BAU approach to forestry has engendered internal tensions within the nation, forcing its hunters and trappers to create an Aboriginal Trappers Association in an attempt to establish an alternate powerbase to protect Cree cultural values and traditional livelihoods. Internal political disputes are ongoing and the refusal of Ainsworth to honour its agreement with LRRF resulted in the nation's forestry division not producing expected revenues and delaying forest management planning responsibilities in favour of "selling trees." As a consequence, the process of developing a detailed forest management plan (DFMP) has been put on hold. A model currently being proposed to resolve this impasse envisions the nation and a community stewardship committee (composed of elders, women and youth), advising LRRF in the development of a DFMP for much of the nation's traditional territory.

The strategic decision taken by the LRRCN and Tallcree First Nations to use cooperative management and provincial forest tenures as a means of obtaining greater stakes in their traditional lands and future remains "unfinished business." The tensions between the pursuit of economic development by means of industrial timber allocations and means of regaining control over traditional territories in order to promote compatibility between industrial resource uses and traditional uses is not unique to the LRRCN; they underlie a common conflict found in many forest dependent Aboriginal communities (Ross and Smith 2002; Treseder 2000).[55] As Natcher (2001)[56] points out, band members are being asked to tolerate an economic strategy that involves them in the very industry that poses one of the greatest threats to their homeland, and perhaps cultural survival, in exchange for tenuous economic benefits. Currently, under existing circumstances, this is a choice that many First Nation members simply refuse to make.

The LRRCN has not abandoned its vision entirely, and continues to explore alternative management models grounded in 1) a "natural capital"/ecosystem service approach to cultural and economic sustainability which focuses on using carbon sequestration, wetlands protection and caribou habitat conservation to create revenue streams while sustaining Aboriginal rights and economic interests, and 2) the development of a multiple/cumulative impact assessment processes focused on the Crown's obligation to manage forest lands not taken up for development as an environment capable of sustaining the way of life and culture of Treaty First Nation peoples.

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[55] M. Ross and P. Smith (2002), *Accommodation of Aboriginal Rights: The Need for an Aboriginal Forest Tenure*, Sustainable Forest Management Synthesis Report, www.sfmnetwork.ca; L. Treseder (2000), *Forest Co-management in Northern Alberta: Conflict, Sustainability and Power*, Masters Thesis, University of Alberta.

[56] D. Natcher (2001), *Building Capacity Through Forest Education: Community and Industry Assessment (Phase One)*, ms on file at the SFM Network, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Case Study 2: Tl'azt'en Nation

The traditional territory of the Tl'azt'en First Nation lies not far from Vanderhoof, the geographic heart of British Columbia. The community of Tache is located 65 km north of Fort St. James at the mouth of the Tache River at Stuart Lake and is the administrative center for the Nation's governance activities. Today, the Tl'azt'en Nation numbers approximately 1300 with 800 people living in the three villages of Tache, Binche and Dzitl'anli (Middle River).

A long standing history of engagement with government and the forest sector has enabled Tl'azt'en Nation to adapt to a rapidly changing administrative and geographic landscape. The *Barracade Treaty* of 1911, the McKenna-McBride Reserve Commission (1915-1916), the trap line registration program of the 1920s, and the BC rail negotiations all exemplify situations in which the Tl'azt'enne drew upon their own capacity for decision-making and self-governance in order to secure access to critical natural resources such as fish, trap lines, hunting grounds and gathering places.

In the 1940s wage labour entered the Tl'azt'en territory, particularly in the forest sector. Hand and horse logging in the winter and sawmilling in the summer were easily incorporated into the regular seasonal rounds of food gathering, fishing and hunting of Tl'azt'enne. This complementary relationship was upset in the 1960s when technological advancements in forestry decreased the need for Tl'azt'en labour, while fostering the development of large scale, highly mechanized forestry operations. What few jobs were available, now required formal training and education. Many Tl'azt'enne that had become dependent on the wage economy were subsequently forced out of the forest sector, with little to no other wage labour options available to them.

In the early 1970s negotiations with BC Rail (now *CN Rail*) regarding compensation for trespassing on reserve lands broke down, and in 1975 the nation blockaded the railway for four months. This direct action and efforts by individuals to enhance their ability to engage government and the courts through higher education were critical in moving the Tl'azt'en Nation beyond laborers in the forest sector to business owner-operators.

Since 1980, the Tl'azt'en Nation has acquired a Tree Farm License (TFL), established two forestry companies — Tanizul Timber Ltd and Teeslee Forest Products Ltd, entered into treaty negotiations and, most recently (1999), partnered with the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) to create a research forest, John Prince Research Forest (JPRF). In 1982, the nation incorporated Tanizul Timber Ltd. In response to being awarded TFL #42 for a renewable period of 25 years. The TFL covers approximately 50,000 ha and has an AAC of 120,000 m3. Forest management objectives set out at the start of Tanzul's management planning in 1983 included:

- providing band members with a meaningful and practical vehicle for job training to follow-up employment,
- creating a stable employment base close to home for band members,

- contributing to the immediate and long-term social and economic benefits of the band through intensive integrated management of the natural resources in the TFL area, and
- administering the TFL so as to allow the band to provide formal input into, and exercise some control over, land use decisions affecting territory traditionally used by the band.

While the TFL initially restricted Tanizul from operating a mill — it was determined that the milling capacity of the region had exceeded the long-term timber supply — Aboriginal Business Canada provided grants and loans to construct a sawmill, Teeslee Forest Products, on reserve lands. However, under the negotiated terms of the TFL, the band could not build a new mill with new technology, and was forced to import old, outdated processing equipment. After the sawmill parts re-built in Tache, milling operations continued for a couple of years with three shifts working. But production was not as high as expected due to breakdowns and malfunctions — the sawmill parts were machined to process coastal forest tree sizes, not interior tree sizes — and in 1998, Teeslee Forest Products shut down putting 40 Tl'azt'en Nation members out of work. Since then, at least two attempts have been made to re-establish the milling operation. Decreasing log values and increasing competition from existing and new tenure holders (e.g., Fort St James Community Forest) have made the operation economically unfeasible. In 2007, the Tl'azt'en administration announced that the mill's machinery would be sold to support building renovations and the completion of a children's playground within the village of Tache.

The John Prince Research Forest (JPRF), located between the Tezzeron and Pinchi lakes, is within the Tl'azt'en Nation and Nak'azdli Band territories common-use area. The JPRF was established in 1999 with a Special Use Permit as a 'legacy forest', a term used to describe management of a forest with the intent of approximating natural conditions (pre-management). JPRF objectives include addressing immediate and long-term forest health issues and providing improved permanent access for research, demonstration, recreation and forest management. Research within the forest was to determine the mix of stand and management zone strategies to produce these legacy conditions. Research projects undertaken by the JPRF relate to sustainable forest management criteria and indicators, education, TEK, wildlife and ecotourism.

The JPRF has contributed to the capacity of younger band members to engage in research related to forest management planning. This was especially critical in the development of the Treaty and Natural Resources office in Tache that was guided by the requirements of the BC Treaty Process. The natural resources file is the strength of the Tache office as it links and relates the genealogy of the community to place-names and family attachments to lands and traditional management practices. A government funded traditional use study provided baseline data that will help to identify critical habitat sites and potential areas for restoration in both pre- and post-treaty environments.

The legacy of capacity building within Tl'azt'en communities to engage the forest sector (and others) within their traditional territory is extensive and varied. As a result of specified skills training and community-based education programming, some Tl'azt'enne have become ambassadors of Tl'azt'en values and principles of land stewardship. However, without guidance from leadership, proactive engagement with skilled individuals, and the institutional support for participation in the forest sector under Tl'azt'en Nation rules, short-term ventures resulting in little to no sustainable community benefits will remain the norm. To achieve these benefits requires a shared understanding and commitment to re-establish the balance among social, cultural, ecological and economic dimensions of sustainability that was once the foundation of Tl'azt'en culture.

Case Study 3: The Innu[57]

The Innu of Labrador number about 1,600 and live primarily in two communities: Natuashish (a community created to replace Davis Inlet) and Sheshatshiu. Until recently, the province of Newfoundland was responsible for housing, infrastructure, education, health care, and social and cultural development. With the creation of Natuashish as a reserve in 2001, Innu became registered under the Indian Act and became the responsibility of the Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs.

In 1967 the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador relocated approximately 100 Mushuau Innu to Davis Inlet. Several tragedies in the early 1990s focused national and international attention on the health and social problems in this community. The Innu believed that they could rebuild and renew their community by strengthening their cultural traditions and moving to a site on the mainland. The move to this site, Little Sango Pond, which is closer to the caribou hunting grounds and a traditional gathering place of the Innu, was completed in 2002/03.

In April 1994, the Government of Canada began to address the social problems in the community of Davis Inlet, while participating in comprehensive land claim and self-government negotiations. The Mushuau Innu Renewal Committee, which includes community youth, elders, federal and provincial representatives, and the Mushuau Innu Band Council, continues to work to heal and strengthen Davis Inlet. However, despite the outward attractiveness of the new community, many social problems remain under the surface (V. Courtois, pers. comm., June 2007).

Land claims negotiations are proceeding toward a comprehensive agreement-in-principle in parallel with the development of a specific mandate for self-government. The discovery of rich mineral deposits at Voisey's Bay (nickel), western Labrador (iron), and lower Churchill River (titanium) has added another dimension to the land claims negotiating process.

Using emergency funding from the federal government, many Mushuau Innu have been trained in trade and construction skills, while others have acquired skills in fire prevention, substance abuse counseling, traditional crafts and/or taken basic adult upgrading courses for post-secondary education. While the local training

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[57] This section has been extracted from the Innu Nation website, www.Innu.ca. It also draws on correspondence received from Valarie Courtois, RPF, for the Innu Nation.

and construction initiative was well received, on-going employment was hard to find. Since most Mushuau Innu wanted to work in their own community, many skilled workers were overlooked for Voisey Bay positions once Natuashish was built.

Forestry operations on the traditional territory of the Innu has left a "bad taste" in many Innu mouths. They were neither consulted nor their concerns accommodated when large scale timber harvesting operations commenced in the 1970's. Due to a number of factors, most forest industry initiatives in central Labrador went bankrupt, leaving behind a legacy of massive clear-cuts, wood waste and resentment. In an attempt to stop further clear-cutting of their lands, the Innu Nation reacted with road blockades in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The Nation also began to commission scientific reports and studies on the environmental impacts of such operations. The findings highlighted several key ecological concerns and helped the Innu to develop an interim forest policy that fit local community and cultural needs. The Innu made it clear to the provincial government and industry that any future forestry activities in Nitassinan (Innu land) would have to incorporate an "ecosystem-based planning" approach, have direct employment benefits for the Innu, and ensure the Innu Nation is actively involved in all levels of forest management planning.

The Department of Forestry tried to accommodate the Innu requests, and although some changes were progressive on paper, they did little to alter harvesting practices and management plans. This situation created a new level of frustration within the Innu communities and tensions between community members and forestry workers. A breakthrough was made in January 2001, with the signing of the *Forest Process Agreement* between the Innu Nation and the province.[58] The agreement was designed to facilitate full Innu participation in forest and has proven to be an effective vehicle for the Innu Nation to prepare an "ecosystem-based forest management plan for District 19", Environmental Protection Guidelines, and a new long-term *Forest Management Agreement* focused on Innu participation and cooperation in forest management planning. Under the agreement, the Innu received a timber allocation of 15,000 m3 from District 19A's total allocation of 198,600 m3, which is expected to increase after a bridge and a new highway are constructed (V. Courtois, pers. comm. June 2007). The Innu see this way of operating as temporary and hope to incorporate their allocation into a long-term tenure.

The *Forest Process Agreement* continues to enable the Innu Nation and the Department of Forestry to work together to implement an ecosystem-based planning approach. Planners from the Innu Nation and the province continue to work with community members, scientists and Innu elders to develop and refine a management plan to protect ecosystem functions and cultural values and to set out a vision for sustainable, community-based forest use. The *Forest Process Agreement* has also enabled the nation to hire a forest planner, technician and four forest guardians to implement the goals and objectives of the agreement, while training and employing young Innu as forest guardians to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the plan.

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[58] Innu Nation/Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2001), *The Forest Process Agreement*. www.innu.ca/forest/sec3.htm

The Innu Forest Guardians Program: Building Capacity from the Ground Up[59]
The Innu Nation Forest Guardian Program (FGP) was developed in the spring of 2001 to facilitate the implementation of the Forest Process Agreement. Led by the Innu Nation forest planner, the Forest Guardian team is currently made up of a forest technician and two forest guardians who serve as the eyes, ears and voice of the Innu on forestry issues. Forest Guardians are trained in all aspects of forest management and have become an integral component of the Innu Nation Environmental Guardians Program, which includes Environmental Co-Researchers, Fisheries Guardians, a Wildlife Stewardship Coordinator, a Geographic Information Systems Analyst and the Voisey's Bay Environmental Monitoring Program.

Forest Guardians receive both western scientific and Innu ecological knowledge needed to effectively do their jobs. The concept of the Environmental Guardian Program is to produce Innu environmental office employees with a broad range of skills and knowledge in a variety of land use sectors (mining, forestry, hydro, etc.), rather than in any one particular specialized field. A total of 18 staff are now employed at the Innu Nation Environment Office and represent a crucial first step for the Innu in regaining and maintaining control, and wise stewardship of the natural resources of Nitassinan.

The FGP initially received core funding for three years from SSHRC. An average of two modules of 1-3 weeks in duration are held each year to provide education and training to Innu environmental guardians in various issues and matters of immediate concern or importance to the Innu. While there is a core curriculum, modules are organized on an ad hoc basis to address issues relating to caribou, migratory birds and proficiencies in communicating and writing in English. No guardians possess a high school graduation certificate, but most have extensive experience with Innu lands and culture. During land-based modules, guardians receive a heavy dose of both western scientific and Innu ecological knowledge, and their performance is evaluated by expert practitioners of both.

The greatest success of the program is that it is completely customized to address Innu priorities and is responsive to local needs, e.g., it provides training in both Innu and western science in order for environmental guardians to represent the Innu rights and interests, and to more effectively engage government and industry on Innu lands. The greatest weakness of the program is that it is reactive (i.e., local capacity is built to meet current challenges), rather than proactive, and funding is accessed on ad hoc basis, and contingent upon outside "champions" rather than any secure institutionalized arrangement. Although not yet an accredited program attached to any particular educational institution, the program continues to build core curriculum and to seek accreditation in order to develop the proactive capacities of Innu to achieve self-determination.

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[59] This section has been extracted from notes of conversations with the Innu Nation forest planner, Valarie Courtois, and the Innu Nation website, www.Innu.ca.

Case Study 4: The Waswanipi Cree[60]

Since the signing of the The *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* in 1975, the Waswanipi Cree (population = 1300) have been heavily impacted by commercial forestry. In 2002, the Grand Council of the Cree signed an agreement with the province, *Agreement Respecting a New Relationship between the Cree Nation and the Government of Quebec* (2002), that resolved many of the legal disputes the Cree had with the province. Known as the *"La Paix des Braves"*, the new relationship agreement sets out a host of provisions, many based on Cree culture and knowledge, for forestry operations on Cree lands. Perhaps the most innovative features of the agreement is the role of Cree tallymen as managers of traditional trap lines which have become the key management unit for forestry operations on Cree lands units.

Several years prior to the signing of the *La Paix des Braves*, the Waswanipi Cree sought to establish under the federal model forest program, the Waswanipi Cree Model Forest (WCMF). The WCMF is a 209,600 hectare area located more than 600 km northwest of Québec City, approximately halfway between Matagami and Chibougamau. The WCMF constitutes the southernmost portion of the Cree territory of Quebec, a land known as Eeyou Astchee ("the land of the Cree"). Through the WCMF, Cree have developed Cree-specific approaches to sustainable forest management based on their values, beliefs and traditions. The vision of the WCMF is to maintain and enhance the quality of Eeyou Astchee for the benefit of all users and as means to assure a viable economic, social and cultural development of the Waswanipi Cree.

The WCMF undertook research to facilitate Waswanipi Cree participation in the forest sector (Rousseau 2006). This research was initiated in part to address forestry employment provisions in the *La Paix des Braves* and to address youth unemployment and social and economic problems within the community. The project, among other things, identified Cree and forest industry concerns and conditions necessary for a successful relationship with the Quebec government. Interviews were held separately with forest company representatives, Cree forest companies/entrepreneurs, Cree forest workers and government representatives. Experiences within the forestry sector, concerns/difficulties encountered, and successes/failures were documented for each group. While non-native forestry companies have attempted to increase Cree employment in their operations and Cree participation in business/contracting opportunities, only a few Cree forest workers have found employment in forestry operations, and partnerships/contracts with Cree entrepreneurs are few in number. Common issues identified by each these groups include:

- the lack of experienced and trained Cree workers in forest operations (which results in Cree's holding low-end, less interesting jobs);
- the lack of community support and qualified community liaison personnel to facilitate Cree engagement in forestry sector;
- the lack of access to capital/investment to start businesses in forestry operations;

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[60] Information about the Waswanipi Cree is taken large from M.H. Rousseau's (2006) report, *Economic Development Project: Final Report*. Submitted to the Waswanipi Cree Model Forest, 31 March 2006.

- language barriers and cultural differences with respect to concepts of work, time and day-to-day priorities;
- the distance between workplace and the Aboriginal workers place of residence; and
- high absenteeism and employee desertion rates.[61]

Among all groups interviewed, high absenteeism and employee desertion rates of Cree trainees and workers was identified as the major problem. Lack of employment opportunities in the forest sector were not a problem for the Crees. Jobs were readily available, but these were also the most problematic (arduous working conditions, unskilled, part-time, uninteresting, long distance from place of residence), and resulted in the highest desertion rates, even among trainees. Although joint-ventures were recognized as mutually beneficial, and a good opportunity for the Cree to acquire experience and avoid capital investment problems, language barriers strained relations between the Cree and francophone forestry companies. The community was identified as having a key role in supporting local education, training and job placement initiatives, not just in forestry, but overall education levels and financial, administrative and managerial aptitudes of forestry contractors/entrepreneurs. Future forestry training programs were recommended to be driven by the community and supportive and accommodative of Cree culture, ways of thinking and social conditions.

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[61] Confounding matters even further, according to one Quebec forest authority representative, was the lack of Cree tallymen's understanding of forestry concepts, terms, maps, practices, policies, rules and procedures, and lack of industry participation in Cree-Quebec consultation processes (which lead to information and knowledge being concentrated in the hands of companies).

THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT NETWORK

Established in 1995, the Sustainable Forest Management Network (SFM Network) is an incorporated, non-profit research organization based at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

The SFM Network's mission is to:
• Deliver an internationally-recognized, interdisciplinary program that undertakes relevant university-based research;
• Develop networks of researchers, industry, government, Aboriginal, and non-government organization partners;
• Offer innovative approaches to knowledge transfer; and
• Train scientists and advanced practitioners to meet the challenges of natural resource management.

The SFM Network receives about 60% of its $7 million annual budget from the Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Program, a Canadian initiative sponsored by the NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR research granting councils. Other funding partners include the University of Alberta, governments, forest industries, Aboriginal groups, non-governmental organizations, and the BIOCAP Canada Foundation (through the Sustainable Forest Management Network/BIOCAP Canada Foundation Joint Venture Agreement).

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND TECHNOLOGY EXTENSION PROGRAM

The SFM Network completed approximately 300 research projects from 1995 – 2004. These projects enhanced the knowledge and understanding of many aspects of the boreal forest ecosystem, provided unique training opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students and established a network of partnerships across Canada between researchers, government, forest companies and Aboriginal communities.

The SFM Network's research program was designed to contribute to the transition of the forestry sector from sustained yield forestry to sustainable forest management. Two key elements in this transition include:
• Development of strategies and tools to promote ecological, economic and social sustainability, and
• Transfer of knowledge and technology to inform policy makers and affect forest management practices.

In order to accomplish this transfer of knowledge, the research completed by the Network must be provided to the Network Partners in a variety of forms. The KETE Program is developing a series of tools to facilitate knowledge transfer to their Partners. The Partners' needs are highly variable, ranging from differences in institutional arrangements or corporate philosophies to the capacity to interpret and implement highly technical information. An assortment of strategies and tools is required to facilitate the exchange of information across scales and to a variety of audiences.

The KETE documents represent one element of the knowledge transfer process, and attempt to synthesize research results, from research conducted by the Network and elsewhere in Canada, into a SFM systems approach to assist foresters, planners and biologists with the development of alternative approaches to forest management planning and operational practices.

SFM NETWORK PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES FEBRUARY 2008

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