

Québec 

 Ontario

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO

CONCERNING

COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS ON FORESTRY

2016

Concerning Collaborative Actions on Forestry

Memorandum of Understanding

WHEREAS Québec and Ontario share a large portion of the Canadian Boreal and Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forests and have a common interest in sustaining our forest's social, economic and environmental contributions to society;

WHEREAS several forestry companies operate in both provinces and contribute significantly to the economic wellbeing of each province;

WHEREAS the Québec-Ontario Agreements "*for Cooperation on Forest Protection and Natural Disturbance Management*" and "*to Promote Sustainable Development of Crown Land and Natural Resources*" were renewed in fall 2015; these agreements cover:

- Coordinated response to forest fires, insect infestations and tree diseases;
- Exchange of information and sharing knowledge related to protection against natural disturbances;
- Ongoing information sharing and collaboration with respect to the sustainable development of Crown land and natural resources;

WHEREAS Québec and Ontario also share interests and challenges, including:

- Lack of awareness and understanding about sustainable forest management policies and practices in the Boreal and Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forests;
- The need to address climate change impacts on our shared forests through various adaptation and mitigation strategies;
- A forest industry in transition due to changing markets for various traditional products;
- Increasing capacity of industry to innovate and expand/diversify into new markets with high growth potential;
- Sustaining wood supply to support forest industry while meeting the requirement to maintain habitat for species at risk;
- Wood flow patterns between the two provinces to support new and existing industry;
- Independent third party forest certification standards and public policy divergence;
- Trade disputes including the expiration of the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement and the associated uncertainty for market access for our forest products;

THEREFORE to address the aforementioned shared interests and challenges as well as Québec's and Ontario's shared interest in focusing our efforts on the nexus of mitigating climate change through greater use of innovative wood products and building systems, and highlighting the importance of sustainable forest management in achieving forestry's role in moving the two provinces to a low carbon economy, the signatories to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agree to collaborate on the implementation of a number of targeted actions that will include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. The Reputation of our Forest Management Systems

- Execute a strategic response to share science-based information about forest management practices and forest industries in our respective provinces, including joint outreach missions, when appropriate, to key customers and other international events where officials from Québec and Ontario can contribute in an effort to increase awareness;

- Exchange information and approaches to engage in public education about our respective forest management systems and how they are designed to support the three key pillars of ecological, economic and social sustainability;

2. Forest Sector Innovation and Market Development

- Collaborate to support forest sector innovation and the bioeconomy, in accordance notably with the principles and spirit of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers' signed Kenora Declaration on Forest Innovation (issued in July 2015);
- Work together on coordinated efforts to support the transition of our shared forest industry to support the production of products required to meet the market demands of the 21st century;
- Work in concert to develop and promote new market opportunities at home and abroad for forests products from our respective provinces; this shared effort will result in expanded markets for our products and greater consumer awareness of our stringent forest management regimes;

3. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

- Share orientations, best practices, tools and technical expertise to contribute to development of forest carbon policies to help support each province's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction; these could include:
 - Development and implementation of offset protocols for Crown and private forests;
 - Promote greater use of wood products in construction resulting in the sequestration of more carbon in buildings and infrastructure, and mitigating emissions from emissions-intensive construction materials;
 - Enhancing mitigation potential of wood energy;
 - Exploration of other potential contributions, such as afforestation and enhanced forest management;

4. Third Party Forest Certification

- Share technical expertise related to the potential policy and market access impacts of various certification standards drafted or finalised by third party forest certification systems;
- Engage jointly, when appropriate, with third party certification organizations to discuss policy frameworks needed to facilitate certification by industry;

5. Cooperate on Recovery Efforts for Species at Risk and Vulnerable Species

- Share knowledge and technical expertise to support recovery strategies and plans for species at risk and vulnerable species;

6. Softwood Lumber Agreement

- Join forces to advocate shared interests in the negotiation of a new Softwood Lumber Agreement between Canada and the United-States, following expiry of the 2006 agreement in October, 2015, take into account, when appropriate, provincial specificities due to the exclusive jurisdiction of provinces over natural resource and the various forest management systems in Canada;

7. Cross-border Movement of Wood

- Share information on the wood flow patterns between Québec and Ontario;

8. Industry Cost Benchmarking

- Share results of studies comparing cost structures for companies operating in Québec and Ontario, with the intent of better understanding and mitigating the unintended effects of policy and programs on the industry;

9. Research and Development

- Facilitate cooperation between both provinces' researchers, with the aim to enhance research capacity and explore opportunities for joint projects.

Québec and Ontario, recognizing that intergovernmental collaboration is vital to realize these actions, will continue to promote strengthened cooperation with all governments and Indigenous peoples, as well as with municipalities, stakeholders, and the public.

10. Implementation

The Signatories charge the Deputy Ministers responsible for forestry, with ensuring the effective implementation of this agreement. The Deputy Ministers will establish a Québec-Ontario working group, co-chaired by their respective Assistant/Associate Deputy Ministers responsible for forestry issues. The working group will facilitate the implementation of the objectives of this MOU and will report progress regularly to the respective Ministers in charge of forestry. A work plan will be established for this purpose.

11. General provisions

This MOU does not create legally binding obligations on the signatories.

Nothing in this MOU derogates from the powers, rights or privileges of the legislatures or governments of Québec and Ontario, including any powers, rights or privileges relating to language, nor can it affect the interpretation of legislation or any regulation, by-law or order made under an Act.

The signatories may amend this MOU by a written document signed by each signatory.

Either Québec or Ontario may terminate this MOU by providing at least 2 months written notice to the other signatory.

Signed in Toronto, on the 21st of October, 2016, one in French and the other in English, both versions being regarded as equally authentic.

**FOR THE GOUVERNEMENT
DU QUÉBEC**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT
OF ONTARIO**

Philippe Couillard
Premier ministre

Kathleen Wynne
Premier

Luc Blanchette
Ministre des Forêts, de la Faune
et des Parcs

Kathryn McGarry
Minister of Natural Resources
and Forestry

Jean-Marc Fournier
Ministre responsable
des Relations canadiennes
et de la Francophonie canadienne