

Media Release

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Crown Lands Network releases report - Unlocking the Economic Potential of New Brunswick Crown Land

Today in Fredericton the Crown Lands Network announced the release of their new publication, *Unlocking the Economic Potential of New Brunswick Crown Land*. ([Report is here - PDF format](#))

"Industrial forestry in New Brunswick supports fewer jobs for the amount of wood harvested now than at any point in the past", states David Coon, Policy Director at the Conservation Council of New Brunswick. "This is a direct result of mill upgrades and mechanization. With the arrival of the Jaakko Pöyry report it became clear that the forest industry wants to travel further down this road. "As evidenced by the Select Committee on Wood Supply hearings, New Brunswickers no longer find the status quo acceptable."

In 2002 the forest industry and the provincial government commissioned a report on our forests, the Jaakko-Pöyry report. The Jaakko-Pöyry report calls for the doubling of the annual allowable cut, the establishment of binding agreements on industry and government, and increased harvesting in special management zones.

The Crown Lands Network proposes that more jobs be realized from Crown Land through value-adding initiatives, non-timber forest products and tenure reform. Investing in training, value-adding opportunities and non-timber forest products will have a greater economic impact locally in the long-term.

"Our Crown lands have the ability to support a wide range of economic activities, from large industries to small, locally owned businesses. Some of these businesses make direct use of wood, whether through lumber, pulp and paper, furniture making or flooring. Other businesses rely on the forests remaining intact, including maple syrup production, nature-based tourism and non-timber forest products. The ideal solution to our current dilemma is finding a way for all of these businesses to coexist, while New Brunswickers get the best economic return possible," states Roberta Clowater, coordinator for the New Brunswick Protected Natural Areas. "Government must make decisions about our Crown lands and our forest economy that include a

wider range of possibilities and scenarios than those proposed by the Jaakko Pöyry report," adds Ms. Clowater.

"We must carefully explore all options available for Crown land use, so that everyone benefits. While doing so we must remember that our forests are naturally diverse and as such have the potential to provide many different products and services now and into the future," said Jean Arnold, Executive Director for Falls Brook Centre.

"Our government holds the Crown lands in trust for the people of New Brunswick," said Jean Arnold. "Falls Brook Centre and the Crown Lands Network have taken it upon themselves to outline new strategies for a sustainable forest-based economy. Value-adding, tenure reform and non-timber forest products are key components of a viable forest economy that supports New Brunswick families," said Arnold.

The Crown Lands Network wants the government to

- 1) develop a future-oriented economic strategy for the forest products sector,
- 2) establish an economic strategy for non-timber forest products on Crown land,
- 3) amend the Crown Lands and Forest Act (1982) to allow for individual, co-tenure, First Nations and municipal licenses; and,
- 4) establish pilot projects to experiment with the different tenure types, partnering with marketing boards, First Nations and municipalities as appropriate.

Half of New Brunswick's forests are found on Crown lands, which are held in trust by the provincial government.

A complete copy of the report is available online at: www.forestsforNB.org.